INTRODUCTON TO TAROT

Lesson One

This course acquaints you with Tarot...one of the most effective aids to spiritual progress ever bequeathed to man. **All** human progress, no matter in what field of being or activity it may be manifested, depends on spiritual progress. Man does not live by bread alone!

Even as we might introduce you to a wise and helpful counselor, so these Tarot lessons will give you the same uplifting benefits which we, and countless others through the ages, have derived for this source of wisdom and inspiration.

It is not our purpose to give you a mass of more or less occult knowledge **about** Tarot. Mere unassimilated knowledge not put to practical use is no better than undigested food which, no matter how it may please the palate, passes through the system without nourishing. So, in this course you will be given instruction in the practical and daily **use** of Tarot, for only through such usage and application can its marvelous and truly magical benefits be obtained.

You may have a long history of academic education, or you may not have finished high school. You may have a real interest in symbols, or you may think symbols are of no concern to you and your affairs. You may have a good memory, or a bad one. (If it is a bad one, it will soon improve, provided you use Tarot as we shall explain it.) You may be a marvel at concentration or suppose yourself to be the world's undefeated mind-wandering champion. Begin to **use** Tarot just where you are and you will affect decided, even startling, changes for the better.

Accompanying this lesson, you will find a copy of HIGHLIGHTS OF TAROT, and the Tarot Tableau. When you cut the tableau apart, as you will later on, be sure to preserve the parts entitled THE PATTERN ON THE TRESTLEBOARD and THE EMERALD TABLET. In HIGHLIGHTS there are also directions for coloring the Keys; but we recommend that you do not follow these at present as this will come later in Tarot Fundamentals, the course which follows this one and gives complete instructions for coloring your Tarot Keys. We have included the coloring instructions in the HIGHLIGHTS OF TAROT booklet mainly because we have found that so many of our members wish to color more than one set as they advance through the different portions of the Qabalistic teaching. Therefore, having coloring instructions condensed into one area is an added convenience for such purposes.

If anything, you will read in HIGHLIGHTS gives you the notion that Tarot is so abstruse and occult that it is way over your head, dismiss that notion. So far from being over your head, Tarot, right now, is in your head and in your heart—in all our mental and physical make-up.

If you never learn a Hebrew letter or an astrological symbol, or anything else in the lists of attributions given in HIGHLIGHTS, you can still use Tarot successfully. It is not at all necessary to learn how Tarot is put together.

Some people, of course, wish to know as much about Tarot as possible, i.e., its history and technical construction. Indeed, this is necessary for gaining certain kinds of more advanced esoteric knowledge. Later this will be made available for those who qualify. Now, however, we shall not burden your memory with a single fact which you cannot put to immediate and practical use.

You have hopes and fears, longings and frustrations. You have problems you'd like to solve. You may be seeking a better job. Or it may be that your physical organism seems to be in need of some adjustment. Whatever may be the particular situation in which you find yourself, whether it be good or bad, you wouldn't be human if you hadn't, down in your heart of hearts, a desire for a greater measure of freedom than you now enjoy.

Precisely that greater freedom is what you will experience as you gain skill in using Tarot. To do so it is necessary to practice, and the early stages will require some effort and a great deal of persistence. All, excepting those pathologically subnormal, can learn to use Tarot, for it is based on a principle mental activity common to all. It is a principle we have all been using since early childhood. There is nothing new about it and nothing unfamiliar. The only novelty is in the application.

The principle is this: all our basic thinking is done in pictures. We **see** before we say. Pictures form in our minds before we label them with words.

Sometimes our pictures are not as clear as they might be. Usually this is because most of our schooling puts too much faith in the supposed virtue of mere words. We spend so much time reading and talking, and so much of our education is no more than leaning words and formulas by rote, that we have let our power of vision fall more or less into disuse—to our great disadvantage.

Whatever initial difficulty you may have in learning to use Tarot may be traced to the bad habit of thinking in words without being sure these mental labels are attached to any real pictures. At this point, we say nothing of the disasters which result from getting wholly mistaken labels on our mental pictures. Nor shall we discuss as yet the dangers we invite when we content ourselves with hasty mental snapshots often taken with our mental cameras out of focus.

Our first step will be very simple. Begin by using the actual Tarot pictures. Sit in a comfortable chair and give five minutes every day to looking attentively at one of the twenty-two Tarot Keys. Do this preferably in the morning as soon as you have finished dressing, and before eating breakfast. If this is impracticable, any other time of day may be selected, so long as it is approximately the same hour every day.

Spend just three days on each of the Tarot Keys. Thus, the total time given to Tarot practice during this entire course will be just fifteen minutes per Key, a total of five hours and thirty minutes over a period of eleven weeks. Hence nobody can offer the excuse that he hasn't time for this study.

Nobody who reads this lesson can say he hasn't five minutes a day to use as he likes. And precisely that, and no more, is all the time you have to set aside for the actual practice of looking at the Keys. It is important, in fact, not to spend **more** than five minutes at this.

That anything so apparently easy should produce remarkable results may seem hard to believe. But the wise men who invented Tarot hit upon a simple way to overcome a difficulty which besets every person who tries to control his mind.

For thousands of years, it has been known that extraordinary powers are latent in every human being and that these powers may be directed by anybody who can keep his mind from wandering. Thus, we have whole libraries of books about concentration, and the more we read the more does it seem that concentration must be a very difficult matter.

An old Oriental writer says we are close to adept ship when we can keep a single image before the mind's eye for just a few minutes. To accomplish this without external aids is very difficult. Thus, Tibetans and Hindus have pictures called **mandalas** which are used as aids to concentration. Images of the gods serve a similar purpose.

Tarot is a device which consists of pictures designed in accordance with the actual operation of man's mental activities. Look at a Tarot Key attentively for five minutes. During this time your state of consciousness will be similar in form and content to that of a great Adept as he contemplates some aspect of his own mental activity. Furthermore, through the agency of this Key and image and your contemplation of it, your consciousness will automatically begin to tune in to the consciousness of those of high spiritual estate...even to the Adepts of the Inner School. You may not become aware of this immediately, though some do. However, patience and perseverance will inevitably bring their reward and probably sooner than you expect.

We caution you not to devote more than five minutes at a time to the practice of looking at any one Tarot Key. You are not yet an adept. Thus, your brain is not at present adjusted to carrying the full load of an adept's consciousness about anything whatever.

Holding one of these Tarot Keys in your mental field for five minutes has a definite and beneficent physical result. Do not try to increase the benefit by longer sessions with the Key. We have given a reason in the preceding paragraph, and this is only one of several. Among others is what science calls the law of diminished returns. Some coal will feed a small fire. More will increase the heat. Too much will smother it.

Read this week's lesson at least twice during the coming week, and as often as you may find it necessary to make sure that you understand it thoroughly. Read it whenever you find a good opportunity. Don't make hard work of it, or of anything else connected with your Tarot study. Above all don't try to commit anything to memory.

When you receive this lesson, look at Key 0 during the five minutes so as to get a general impression of the design. Next day give a little more attention to the details. The third day see if you can find anything not mentioned in the brief paragraphs of description in HIGHLIGHTS and in this lesson. If you do see anything that seems to be important, or that rouses your curiosity, make a note of it and ask yourself, "What does this mean?" Sooner or later, you will get the right answer, and it will come from **within.**

During the first weeks the results may not be particularly impressive. Sometimes it occurs that remarkable reactions are experienced from the very beginning. As a rule, the effect of Tarot practice is **cumulative** rather than immediate.

Suppose you have gone through life feeling unloved or unlovable. This becomes a deep-seated subconscious pattern which manifests in your environment. It expresses itself in your relationships with family, friends or business associates. We are in continuous contact with each other on subconscious levels. If we feel unlovable, we call forth from ourselves and others the type of conduct which brings rejection. Change the inner pattern and you change your relationships from unhappy to happy ones. Tarot will help you to do this. Its practice gradually helps you to **know** who and what you are and the results become manifest in your everyday life.

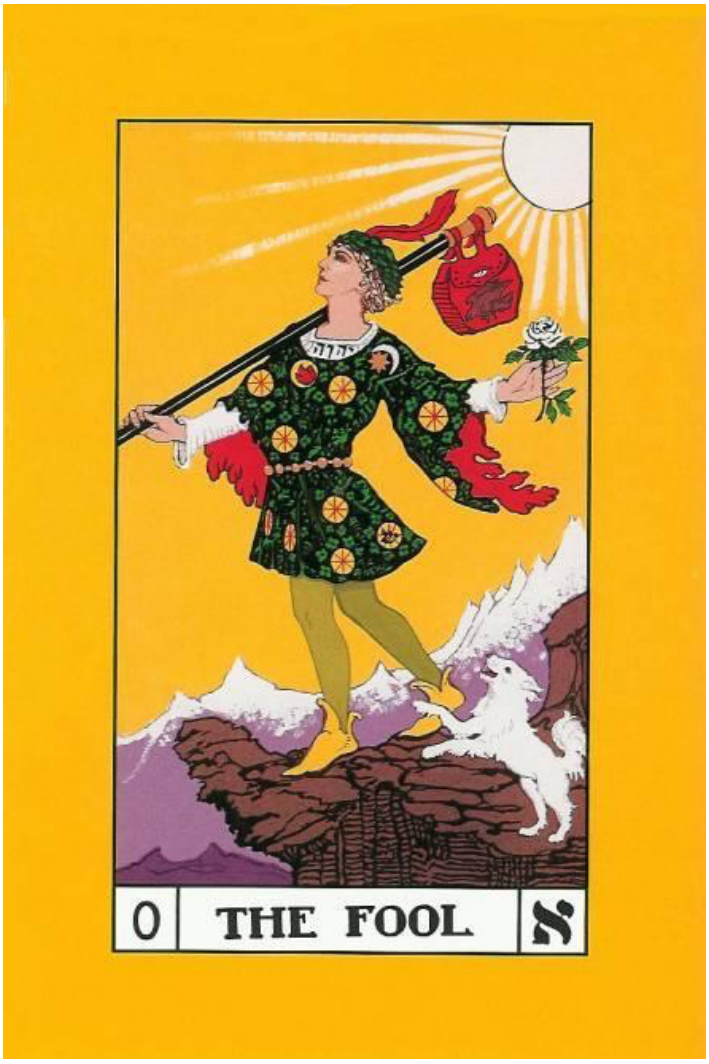
As we learn to feel and live the positive states of mind, we transform our personalities. This gives us greater ability to change our environment. Affirmations are helpful, but they do not go far enough. Tarot practice is designed to bring about the transmutations which are required for mental and spiritual growth. It will work, if you **work** it. Often no striking reaction is noticed until one comes to a Key which has relation to some sensitive point in one's own mental make-up. This may be a strong point or a weak one; but one feels definitely that he has a special affinity for one or more of the Tarot Keys.

There is a profound occult reason for this. Yet you should be on your guard against paying more attention to one Key than to another, especially during this introductory course. Every one of the Keys is a picture, remember, of some aspect of yourself. The subject matter of the Tarot series, from beginning to end, is always **yourself.** No matter what a picture may look like, it is invariably a picture of **you.**

Thus, Tarot has to do with the one thing which really interests you more than anything else in the world. If you suffer from mock modesty, or some other complex such as psychologists mention, you may not be willing to admit that nothing interests you so much

as yourself. If you are a healthy-minded, normal person, you know this is true, and will admit it readily.
If you are really what is called an “advanced soul”, there is nothing else that interests you. All wisdom is the matured experience of those who obey the injunction, “Know Thyself.”

All ethics rests on the same foundation, for nobody who is wanting in self-knowledge can practice the Golden Rule. All science, no matter in what field, has the same basis and the same objectives. For whatever science the human race possesses is the collective result of the research and invention of human selves, and every force known to physicists and chemists is a force at work inside man as well as outside him. The Wheel of Tarot is really the wheel of human nature. By keeping this always in mind you will avoid making Tarot a mere set of pictorial symbols.



KEY 0. THE FOOL

In your HIGHLIGHTS OF TAROT, you have read a brief explanation of this Key, and in the Table of Attributions of the same booklet you will find that the Fool is the Tarot picture of super-consciousness and of cultural power.

If any of the other details mentioned in the booklet happen to stick in your memory, well and good; but make no endeavor to commit to memory any of the material in HIGHLIGHTS. You may see the reason for some of the attributions. Others may seem far-fetched. You will, however, find in the following paragraphs all you need to know in order to lay a foundation for thorough understanding of Key 0.

All the Tarot Keys have two distinct levels of interpretation. There is the outer, superficial significance which may be seen at a glance. Then there is the deeper, inner meaning which may be brought to the surface of consciousness without effort or strain by the simple act of looking attentively at the Key.

Superficially, the Fool is a picture of a heedless, sky-gazing man, just about to fall from a great height into a deep abyss. It corresponds exactly to all proverbial wisdom concerning the folly of having one's head in the clouds.

Even if you get no further than this with Key 0, it has a valuable lesson. One does run the risk of grave dangers when he is so engrossed with actual or metaphorical sky gazing that he pays no attention to his present situation. Thus, the first lesson of Tarot is this:

Don't project yourself so far into the future that you lose sight of where you are. Dreams and visions and ideals have their proper place; but he who loses himself in the contemplation of airy nothings unfits himself for dealing with the practical affairs of life.

At the deeper level of interpretation, the Fool is a picture of what we must use in all our endeavors to attain a greater measure of freedom. Various names have been given to this power. You may call it any of those listed in HIGHLIGHTS. You may term it God. You may call it your real **Self.** Names are only labels, some better, some worse, than others. Keep on using the one you are accustomed to unless some of those given in our booklet seem to come nearer to being adequate.

The more important thing to have in mind as you look at Key 0 is that it is really the most perfect and most complete aspect of yourself. It is the part of you which is above and beyond your external personality. Above and beyond your thinking, conscious mind. Part of your very **Self**, remember—or even more truly, the **Whole** of you, of which mind, body, and all else entering into your seemingly separate personality are but parts.

This is a picture of the absolutely free and perfect Being which is the animating principle and core of your outer personality. It bears the number Zero because 0 is by no means a symbol of mere nothingness.

In occult arithmetic, 0 stands for absolute Unity, for the **One Reality** which is before all beginnings. This is nothing we know directly. We cannot sense it. We cannot define it. We cannot prove that it really exists because it is beyond all our logic and our reasoning just as it is beyond every other conceivable limitation. Yet the unanimous report of the wise is that this **One Life-power** is a real presence which pervades the universe, and Those Who Know bear witness that, beyond knowledge of the ordinary sort, and beyond the limits and definitions of logic, there is possible an experience of this Eternal Youth whose life runs through creation and is the fount of vitality for all lesser lives.

Closer examination of the picture will show you that though the Fool stands close to the edge of a precipice, there is room for him to take another step forward. The esoteric tradition which has come down to us from the original inventors of Tarot says this detail of the symbolism signifies an eternal truth. No matter how far the Life-power may advance, it can always take another step.

On the personal level of interpretation, as it applies to you, this means that you never come to the very limit of your possibilities. Sometimes you may wander into a blind alley, but even then, you can always retrace your steps a little and come to a place where further progress is possible.

There are profound metaphysical and philosophical reasons for the selection of the title of Key 0. We need not enter into them here. Yet one reason is obvious. Men of superior vision are usually looked upon by their contemporaries as being rather foolish. Every great prophet, every great inventor, every great discoverer has been jeered at.

Here it might be well to add that it does not follow that every tomfool is really a man superior to his fellows. We must not fall into the error of those primitive tribes who regard madmen as being divinely inspired. A good many supposedly civilized persons seem to embrace this error, even today. Consider the hypnotic effect of a Hitler or a Mussolini upon their deluded followers. Glance at the advertisements on the religious page of any metropolitan newspaper and you can see for yourself that psychosis is often mistaken for prophecy.

During the three days you look at the picture of the Fool, make no conscious effort to interpret the symbols. If an idea comes to you, make a note of it.

Provide yourself with a loose-leaf notebook. Don't make any special endeavor to fill it. An idea may come to you any time and you can jot it down on a piece of paper or the back of an envelope. As you progress with this work you'll find yourself taking a little time, one or two evenings a week, to look over your notes and add to them. Interest grows with attention and the longer you work with the Tarot Keys the more will they intrigue you.

The main practical use of Key 0 is to put you in touch with your inner sources of power. After you have looked at the actual picture for three consecutive days, you will find that you can summon it before your mind's eye easily. Just think about it and you will see it.

Thus, you can hold your mind to this particular form whenever you desire. And you will find that even a momentary glimpse of this happy traveler through the higher spaces will give you a lift.

Try it whenever you are beset by a mood of depression. Don't try to suppress the mood. Just look at the Fool. Look at the actual picture and keep it handy. Glance at it mentally if you are away from home.

Soon actual experience will convince you that somehow there is always a positive reaction. We might take pages to explain the psychological reasons for this, and if you are one of those who want to know **why** Tarot works its wonders, you will have plenty of opportunity to learn as you progress in the B.O.T.A. curriculum. Just now, it is more important to know that

it **does** work, and this simple and easy practice will soon convince you that there is an almost magical potency in this picture. It is a sure antidote for depression.

KEY 1. THE MAGICIAN

With this Key, the principle of contrast, which runs throughout the Tarot series, comes into operation. Every Key is in some sense the opposite and complement of the one, which precedes it. Also, the twenty-two Keys fall into eleven contrasting pairs: 0 and 1, 2 and 3, 4 and 5, and so on.

The contrasts are, as a rule, quite obvious. Thus a magician or wise man is clearly in contrast to a fool. The Hebrew letter ב, printed on Key 1, suggests the sphere of human life, and the family affairs, which go on indoors because it means "house". But the letter, א, Aleph, on Key 0 means "Bull" or "Ox", and has to do with what goes on in a field outside the special limitations of human environment.

Again, the number 1 is the number of Beginning, but 0 is the sign of the absolute Unity, which is before all beginnings. In the Bible, the very first letter of Genesis is ב, and in the Zohar, one of the principal collections of profound Qabalistic interpretations of the Scriptures, much is made of the distinction between Aleph and the first letter of alphabet, and Beth, with which, says the Zohar, creation began.

Comparison of the two pictures shows many other contrasts. The Fool stands on a barren height; and the Magician in a garden. The Fool is evidently preoccupied with his vision of the distant height, far beyond him, across the abyss. The Magician is concerned with what goes on in his immediate vicinity and he looks down toward what is below him. The Fool's possessions are not in use and he carries them in a wallet slung over his shoulder. The four implements of the Magician are spread before him on his table and thus they are ready at hand to use as occasion arises.

Perhaps the most important detail of Key 1 is the position of the Magician's hands. With his right hand he lifts a wand upward toward the sky. His left hand makes the universal gesture of attention, pointing with extended forefinger toward the fertile earth at his feet.

The magician, therefore, is a symbol of what psychology calls self-conscious awareness, or objective mind. This is the ordinary waking consciousness of human beings. It is the planning mind, the mind, which comes to grips with our daily problems, and its basic function is attention.

Alert watchfulness is the key idea of this picture. Here is a representation of what wise men see with their mind's eye when they consider the mental function of concentration. To your inner consciousness this Key says:

"Be alert. Remember that all the power you can direct comes from a higher level. Make it your first concern to relate yourself to the Source of power. Your place in the scheme of things is to act as a transformer of energy. Force flows **through** you to whatever you give your full measure of attention. Nothing can withstand the mental force of one who has mastered the art of concentration. Yet concentration is as easy as pointing your finger. It is only fools and charlatans who are responsible for the erroneous notion that there is anything particularly difficult about concentration. Just watch, and keep at it. Then you will be able to see through and into the things which constitute your environment, instead of merely looking at them."

As HIGHLIGHTS says, the garden represents the subconscious field whence come the hidden powers man may direct in his quest for increased freedom. These powers are, symbolized by the lilies and roses. The lilies stand for various aspects of truth and to this their white color also refers. The roses are symbols of human desires.

There are four lilies because all possible human knowledge falls into four main categories. To explain this here would be to go beyond the range of this introductory course, but we mention it to show that every detail of Tarot symbolism has a definite meaning.

There are five roses because every object of human desire has relation to one or more of the five major senses. Modern psychology adds other senses to the fivefold classification, which was current when Tarot was invented; but for all practical purposes it is accurate to say that the fulfillment of any human desire includes the bringing about of conditions, which may be experienced by our sense.

The magician cultivates these flowers. He improves them, and by force of his control of their development takes them far beyond the conditions spontaneously provided by nature. He is a transformer and transmuter of experience. Taking things as he finds them, he watches until he perceives the underlying principle at work in what he observes. Then he applies that principle in novel ways so as to produce a different situation.

This is the whole method of science, and the four implements on the Magician's table refer to the means employed in meeting and dealing with the actual conditions of human environment.

The wand symbolizes the first means. This is simply a pointer and is really and extension of the pointing forefinger. The first requisite for the solution of any problem is to give it one's full attention. Every problem constrains its own solution and that solution is perceived by attentive observation. Such is the beginning of all science. It is simple watching.
The cup stands for the second mental tool. This is imagination. Observation collects experience. Imagination shapes it as a cup shapes what is poured into it. What we call "laws of nature" are simply man's collected experiences made into a pattern by acts of imagination.

The third means is action, typified by the sword. We may know a great deal and we may have fine perceptions of relationships, but until we **do** something, nothing is changed. Our action invariably tears down something in order to replace it with something else. No matter how constructive we may be, this is true of all effective action.

Persons who talk about having nothing, but constructive thoughts are making meaningless noises. You can't build a house unless you cut down trees, or quarry stones, or take clay and mould it into bricks. You can't paint a picture unless you take the color out of the tubes. The statue never appears until the sculptor cuts away the stone, which hides the figure he has imagined. Controlled and wisely directed destruction is the principal tool of civilization.

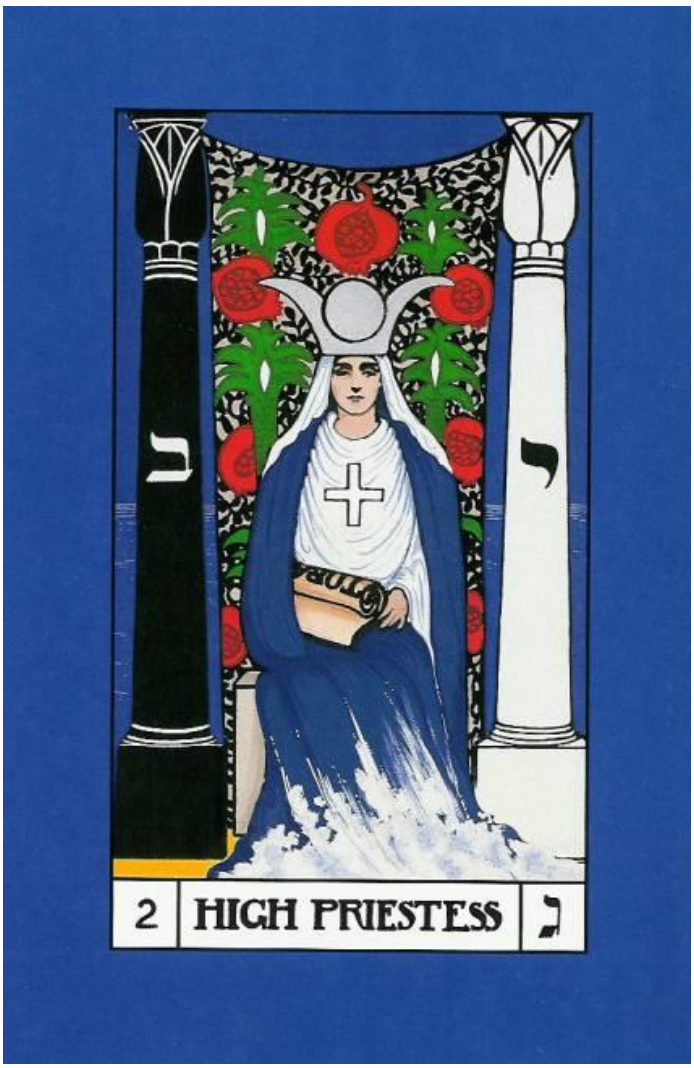
Finally, there is the finished product, and this is represented by a coin because everything made by man's ingenuity has value. Nor should we permit ourselves to indulge in the silly scorn for money, which finds spurious support in a bad translation of a passage in the New Testament. Poverty is no mark of spirituality.

Money is a wonderful invention, and when rightly used, a blessing. In spite of what the King James Version says, nowhere does the Bible condemn money. What it does condemn is **lust** for money and contempt for it. Those who have a proper respect for this device whereby all values may be measured, as all values in science are measured by means of mathematics, understand that money is one of the greatest human devices for the promotion of the general welfare.

The time will come when this measure of value will be used aright, because those who love justice and mankind will revive the ancient science of money.

Key 1, then, is the picture you use to develop your power of concentration, to make you more alert, and to evoke from your inner consciousness powers, which will enable you to deal more satisfactorily with practical problems.

Key 0 puts you in touch mentally with the limitless Source of all power. Key 1 calls into action the mental activities whereby you may apply this power to the end of changing the conditions of your life for the better.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

LESSON 2

KEY 2. THE HIGH PRIESTESS

As Beth, the House is a contrast to Aleph, the Ox, and as the number 1 is a contrast to zero, so are the letter and number of the High Priestess antitheses to those of the Magician.

Gimel ג, means "camel", and suggests travel, commerce, the carrying of news from one place to another, and so on. These ideas are opposite to those of fixed location, and the "stay-at-home" attitude which are among the associations of the word "house".

In the doubling or duplication which 2 implies, we have, again, a contrast to the singleness of 1. Combined with the ideas suggested by "camel", 2 gives us the notion of the two extremes of a journey, its beginning and end; of the two parties necessary to strike a bargain in commerce; and of the two concerned with news, those who hear and those who tell.

Thus even this slight consideration of the meanings of Gimel and 2 shows that they are related to the High Priestess. This woman in her place between two contrasting pillars at the doorway of a temple is a picture of what modern psychology calls subconscious or subjective mind.

Look at this calm, seated woman. The High Priestess is passive, receptive, and, by ancient meanings of the title, virginal.

She is, moreover, concerned with records of the past as her book or scroll makes evident. In prehistoric times, these records were unwritten. They were transmitted orally. Thus they were all committed to memory. The written word is simply artificial memory.

Proper sequence of teaching in these graded courses of instruction on the spiritual significance and practical use of the 22 Tarot Keys has been carefully planned. First it is necessary to become familiar with the form aspect of the Tarot Keys as given in this introductory course. In the course

immediately following this one (Tarot Fundamentals), the student is required to color the Tarot Keys. This later correlation of form with color in the archetypal language of the Tarot develops a heightening of the senses and has such a profound effect on subconsciousness, that old frozen negative patterns become readily accessible to transmutation. All experience and awareness becomes intensified and this is preparation for direct spiritual awareness and expanded consciousness which goes with it.

Careful tests conducted in the fields of hypnotic and reverie regression have fully demonstrated that subconsciousness retains and remembers everything . . . yes, **everything** down to the smallest and seemingly **insignificant** detail. It records the trivial and useless just as well as the significant parts of what we experience. No clear impression escapes being written on the scroll of the High Priestess. Subconscious memory is perfect and therefore cannot be improved.

Memory is the basic power of subconsciousness and the High Priestess sums up in the details of her symbolism all anyone need know in order to make maximum and practical use of memory.

Note that we say **practical** use. To clutter up our conscious minds with the unimportant and trivial details contained in our subconscious memory is just as bad as failure to remember the significant and important items of our experience. Indeed, several mental diseases are characterized by too perfect recollection.

What we **can** develop by intelligent use of Key 2 is our power of recollection, our ability to duplicate past experiences, our skill in use of the laws whereby mental images are grouped together in our subconscious filing system.

Such skill presupposes concentration and attention, the mental activities associated with the Magician. Much of what is called faulty memory is just want of attention. Substitute for the scroll a motion picture film and this brings the symbol up-to-date. If the camera be badly focused, or not even pointed at what is going on, the pictures will either be dim, or the film will be blank.

Hence the first requisite to better powers of recollection is to make sure of being **alive** and **alert** to what is going on around us. We must be "here", or we shall be sure to forget.

Now look at the High Priestess and you will see that she is perfectly quiet, perfectly passive. This is the first requirement for good recollection. Strain to remember something and it refuses to rise to the surface of your mind. Just sit still and relax and you will find the needed information rising easily to the surface provided only that the **first impression was clear and sharply defined.** We know no remedy for blurred, hazy images except a change from slovenly inattentiveness to deliberate determination to be fully alive to what goes on during every waking moment.

Artificial mnemonic systems are of little value except for mental tricks. Give your subconsciousness a chance by furnishing it with clear images as you go along and its automatic filing system will soon put your mental house in order.

We say automatic because the laws of recall do work automatically. We make them useless by inattention. We interfere with their operation when we strain and struggle to remember. If we know what they are and **let** them do their work, we shall be able to recall anything we may require.

Key 2 symbolizes all the laws of recall. The two pillars are alike in shape because we naturally group together whatever images are like one another. Yet these pillars are opposite in color because a second law of association is that of contrast. Think of light and you think also of darkness. Mutt's lanky length calls up the squat chubby form of Jeff. So, similarity and contrast are both symbolized by the pillars because these two laws always act together.

A third law is recentness. Other things being equal we recall easiest what we have most recently experienced. The latest news, the funny story we heard this afternoon, the interesting display in some window we passed an hour ago, all these we recall without effort. The High Priestess does not have to turn her scroll to read what she has just recorded.

The fourth law is the law of repetition, and this is not only directly related to the number 2 but has several other representations in the various details of the design. If you are interested in tracing them, by all means do so. You will find aids to this in HIGHLIGHTS, but unless yours is the analytical student temperament, remember this is not necessary in order to make use of this Key. You know that anything frequently repeated is easy to recall. Give the casual glance most of us grant to a new acquaintance, and a second meeting may call forth no flash of recollection. See a man day after day and you recognize him even at a distance.

The fifth law is intensity. We remember our first experiences of this or that because they received full voluntary attention. Childhood is therefore more vivid than yesterday, but if we learn to renew our youth-and the secret of this is in the reconditioning we achieve through use of the Tarot Keys-we shall once more live deeply and fully and shall have vivid memories instead of the hazy impressions we are content with now.

As we have said, artificial mnemonic systems are of little value. The reason is that all of them are arbitrary. One popular system of this kind is based on association of words with numbers. It enables persons, patient enough to master it to dazzle their acquaintances with pyrotechnic displays of memory. Yet even experts in these trick systems admit that what real value the system possesses is to be found in the fact that, in a roundabout way, it exercises our basic powers of recollection.

Tarot itself is, among other things, one of the best mnemonic systems . . . one that is valuable because its association clues are **not** arbitrary. By the time you finish this course, you will possess twenty-two sharply defined mental pictures, each associated with a number.

Think of a picture and you will see the number printed on the Key near the title. Think of a number and the picture will flash instantly before your mind's eye. No effort is needed. Numbers and pictures go naturally together.

Since the associations are not arbitrary, it is possible to make the Tarot sequence the basis for a wonderful aid to recollection.

Suppose, for instance, you have five things you must do without fail tomorrow. It takes no time, and little effort, to link these activities, by means of visual images, to the first five Tarot Keys.

Begin by making a list. Get the things you have to do into proper order. Suppose the first is to see your physician. You might imagine the word DOCTOR written in large, white letters on the Fool's wallet. Because, the more fantastic the association, the easier the recollection.

If the second thing you have to do is to attend to some correspondence, you might imagine a big pen lying, on the Magician's table with the rest of his implements. Or perhaps the image of a pile of letters on the same table may suggest itself. It does not matter what, so long as the image is directly related to what you desire to remember. As a rule the first picture that comes is best.

In the same way you may organize the main headings of a speech so that you will realize to the full the truth of Eliphas Levi's promise that Tarot is the key to the oratorical art. Just put the headings in order and look for some pictorial element in each. Then associate what you find with the Tarot Key corresponding by number with the heading.

No one needs notes to speak in public. Using them is just a bad habit. Rely on your memory even though you may stumble at first. Before long you'll be able to say whatever you have to say to a thousand just as easily as to one.

Be careful not to jump ahead of this course in order to acquire the mnemonic system we have just described. During the three days covered by this part of the lesson and for the present, make your use of Tarot for recollection training nothing other than your five minute session with the High Priestess.

Remember, Tarot speaks a pictorial language you know subconsciously. You do not have to learn it. What you **are** learning is how to make conscious use of this subconscious treasure house. You have only to let yourself be spoken to through your eyes. Even three days with the High Priestess will do wonders in the way of making your subconsciousness realize that you expect it to put at your disposal its wonderful power of associating ideas.

After three days, whenever you want to recall something, sit down quietly for a few moments and bring before your mind's eye the picture of Key 2 with the express intention of recalling what you desire. Be as relaxed as you can. Don't cast about in your mind for the desired piece of information. Just look mentally at this image of the Perfect Recorder of all experience. You will be amazed at the result.

KEY 3. THE EMPRESS

With the letter printed on Key 3 we are back home from our journey on the camel of association, back at the door of the house. For the meaning of ד, Daleth is "door". Hence we know that in Key 3, though the symbolism is predominantly feminine, we are once more at the self-conscious level of activity. And sure enough the Empress, like the Magician, is in a garden and red roses are prominent features of the scene.

Yet there is an echo of the preceding Key. For the Empress is not only a woman, but is also a seated figure like the High Priestess. She is in sharp contrast to the High Priestess also for she is a wife, and the Tarot tradition says she is a pregnant mother, by implication the wife of the Emperor whose picture follows hers in the series.

Your tables in HIGHLIGHTS will tell you the High Priestess corresponds to the Moon, related in mythology to chaste, virgin Diana. No mere fancy, this, for who cannot see the connection between acts of memory and the hunting associated with Diana, lady of the moon?

The Empress is a sea-born Venus, traditional patroness of childbirth and mistress also of beauty and of the arts. Key **3** is by number the sum of 1 and 2, or a symbol in the Tarot series of the Magician's union with the High Priestess whereby the cold virginity of Diana is transformed into the rich fertility of Venus, astrological correspondence to Key 3.

This fertility, be it remembered, though its, immediate agent is subconsciousness, the feminine member of the two aspects of personal consciousness, has its field of operation in the realm of self-consciousness. For the Empress is imagination, the mind's power to make new combinations from the store of remembered experiences. Associated rightly, therefore, Daleth the door, because creative imagination is truly the entrance to new life and to new worlds.

See how true to your own mental nature this Tarot sequence is. All your mental and other powers are specializations of the limitless Life-power pictured by the Fool. A power which, can and does, assume all sorts of particular forms.

What forms it does assume are the ones to which you **pay attention.** What you make the object of your attention is what you become, sooner or later. Fix your attention on images of misery, poverty and weakness and their actual physical embodiments will become part of your surroundings. Even your body, remember, is part of your environment. If, your personal Magician works the black, destructive transformations resulting from fear and doubt, our house of life will be built in strict agreement with those ill-drawn plans.

Change the patterns by attending to their opposites, and presently creative imagination, symbolized by the Empress, will begin to build you a new life and will impress even the conditions of your environment with new ideas. No mystical theory, this. It is sober fact attested by the accumulated experience of ages.

Again, this process is almost automatic. If you do the first thing needful, the rest follows of itself. Look at your problem closely and you will discover the answers in the problem itself. More than this, your memory record, as you continue this wise approach to all experience, will be enriched by numerous clear Realizations of the way things really are, instead of being cumbered with useless repetitions of the way things look.

In consequence of this, the combining and associative power of subconsciousness will make you aware of new images continually. Your mind will be fertile as the Empress' garden, and you will reap a wonderful harvest of ideas.

This is by no means a fancy picture, neither is there any particular difficulty about it. The yoke of the Law of Life is easy. Rest for mind and heart are assured for those who are persistent enough to keep facing forward on the Path until it leads them out of the fogs of appearance into the clear Light of true Realization.

All the wise have understood the power of imagination. None have expressed it better than Eliphas Levi whose words were inspired by this Tarot picture of the Empress. We pass them on to you because we know nothing more useful at this stage of your work.

"The understanding and the will of man are instruments which are incalculable in their power and capacity. But the will and understanding have an auxiliary instrument in a faculty which is too little understood . . . I speak of the imagination.

"Imagination is actually as the eye of the soul, and it is therein that forms are delineated and preserved; by its means we behold the reflections of the invisible world. It is the mirror of visions and the apparatus of magical life. Thereby we cure disease, modify the seasons, ward off death from the living, and resuscitate those who are dead, because this faculty exalts the will and gives it power over the universal agent.

"Imagination determines the form of the child in its mother’s womb it gives wings to contagion, and points the weapons of warfare. Are you exposed in a battle? Believe yourself as invulnerable as Achilles and you will be so, says Paracelsus. Fear attracts bullets, and courage turns them back on their path.

"There is no invisible world there are merely various degrees in the perfection of organs. The body is the crude representation and the perishable coating of the soul. Spiritual and corporeal are merely words which express degrees in the tenuity and density of substance. What we call the imagination in man is the inherent faculty of the soul to assimilate to itself the images and reflections contained in the living light. These images and reflections are revelations when science intervenes to disclose to us their Logos or light.

"The man of genius differs from the dreamer and the madman in this only, that his creations are analogous to truth, while those of madmen and dreamers are lost reflections and wandering images. Thus for the sage to imagine is to see, as for the magician to speak is to create . . . The seer knows with an absolute knowledge that the things he imagines are true, and experience invariably confirms his visions."

Powers like those Levi describes may seem to be far beyond your present attainments. Yet no sage ever lived who was not once where you are now, no adept walks the earth today (and many are now living in all parts of the world) who was not once beset by the same delusions which are the causes of whatever miseries you may suffer now.

The rich fertility, the calm peace and happiness, the ability to order all things aright, which are pictured in Key **3** are not something for you to acquire. They are inalienable possessions, which it is your right, and more than your right, your **duty,** to put to use.

Let your contemplation of this Key begin for you the process of renewal. Like this happy, radiant woman, your inner life is even now forming the image and likeness of a **new personality.** It does not matter what your past has been. Your future is yours to create! To build the meaning of this Key of Tarot into your very flesh and blood is to set in motion forces which, though at first they work almost imperceptibly below the surface, will inevitably bring to pass fulfillments far beyond the best of your present expectations.

As yet, we add nothing in the way of practical methods to the instruction given in Lesson 1. Simply look at these two Keys during the coming week, five minutes a day. As you look, summon whatever knowledge you may have gathered as to the wonderful power of that silent potency, **Light,** to aid you to understand that "mere looking" is actually directed use of the same radiant energy which is the basic substance of the entire physical universe.

There is nothing you know that is not made of light. There is no force or power you employ which is not a transformation of that same illimitable radiance. No matter how much you utilize, there is always room for more. Infinity is inexhaustible.

Simple the practice is . . . too simple for some types of mind who are of the opinion that nothing can be effective unless it be full of sound and fury. Yet we may remember the old saying, "The world belongs to the silent ones."

The potent forces of the universe work noiselessly and without friction, like an engine in perfect order. Our faulty machinery requires tremendous temperatures (indicative of enormous waste) to

bring about chemical transformations and transmutations, which even the least of weeds performs without any appreciable output of heat.

The human body is far, far higher in the scale of evolution than are those of plants. Already men and women walk this earth like the gods they really are. The Tarot Keys are their gift to us, to the end that, by right use of these most potent instruments, we may become members of that increasing host, the Great Companions who tread the Path leading to the heights of liberation.

I AM the Door of Life,
The passage from the world of ideas
Into the world of form.
Expressing myself, I take form in substance,
But the power which worketh in that substance
Is the sovereign force of mine outflowing ideas.

Consider well, O Israel,
The knowledge of me, which thou hast
In the sacred letters.
For with them, even as it is written,
Hath the universe been created.

From the BOOK OF TOKENS
By Dr. Paul F. Case

INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Three

KEY 4. THE EMPEROR

Probably the earliest houses had but one aperture in the wall, which opening was both door and window. Later came, the idea of having a special opening to admit light and air and to permit observation of persons approaching. Thus the letter Heh ה, whose name means "window", follows logically after Daleth, the door.

There is also a logical reason for putting the Emperor after the Empress. A man cannot be master of his household until his mate has had children. Actual fatherhood is a consequence of what the mother brings into the world.

The generation of mental images at the level of self-consciousness (Empress), is a necessary forerunner to reason (Emperor). Until we have something to regulate, we cannot set our mental house in order. All meanings of the number 4 are related to order because 4, corresponds to the square.

Regulation and supervision are implied by everything in Key 4. Supervision is **overseeing.** Thus the function of sight is attributed to Heh and the Emperor.

The martial aspect of the Emperor is obvious. Here is a man of war clad in armor. He sits on a cube like the High Priestess, but the stone bears a ram's head, and this, with the same design on his shoulder and the symbol at the top of his helmet, relates to the astrological correspondence to Aries, first sign of the zodiac, which is represented in the Hebrew alphabet by the letter Heh. (Aries rules the head and the function of sight).

Among our senses sight is chief. By it we regulate our lives and our world. The quality of our vision determines the course of our progress toward liberation.

Unless we imagine, we do not really see. So true is this that even physical vision requires more than correct optical functioning of the eyes and their brain-centers. Occasionally a man born blind receives his sight, but after this occurs he must spend some months in learning to see. For him there is no difference in appearance between a globe and a circle. Persons walking toward him seem to grow as they approach.
Until imagination based on other senses enables him to supplement what his eyes report, he has no true vision of the world on which his eyes have opened.

We have all passed through this experience, but because we learned these lessons in infancy we have forgotten that we had to **learn** to see just as surely as we had to learn to walk. The mind is the true seer. The eyes are only its tools, and all tools need skillful handling.

In Hebrew, the letter Heh serves the same purpose as the English definite article **the.** Hence this letter stands for the mental activity whereby we single out particular things and distinguish them from others more or less like them.

Thus **classification** is one basic meaning of Key 4. The Emperor represents this ordering process of our minds whereby we control the conditions of our environment.

Such control is not the imposition of our fancies on the world. We **never** force nature into obeying us. On the contrary, she serves us at a price. We must see things as they are. Definition must square with fact. Reasoning must be a development of accurate observation. Then imagination will be true and vision will be precipitated into our environment as actual physical things and conditions.

They who gave us Tarot, and they who now compose that Inner School which has kept alive the wisdom behind Tarot, see truly and reason correctly. Their vision of what the earth may be when man unfolds a better understanding of himself and of his environment, is recorded in these Keys. One of the most valuable results of Tarot study is that by it man's consciousness is enriched and transformed so that he learns to see the true world which lies hidden behind the veils of superficial appearances.

Liberation, remember, is indefinitely progressive. If we may accept the words of those who are believed by many to be Masters of the Wisdom, even they have their problems. To us they may seem almost as demigods, but their simple language makes it perfectly clear that they have no such illusions about themselves or their attainments.

Where they differ principally from many of us is in their vision of man and their vision of nature. They know what **is** in man having found it in themselves. They understand that nature is always **for** man, never **against** him. So they do easily what most of us have not yet dreamed of doing, yet nothing they have accomplished is really beyond our powers.

Not one of them is beguiled by the fancy that everything would be all right if only the world were ordered in accordance with some system-political, economic, or technological. Provide the best arrangement of things you can and entrust it to the management of men and women who have no vision. It will fail.

Does this mean we have no faith in any system? Does it mean, to be specific, that the increasingly difficult endeavor to preserve the institutions our forefathers gave their all to establish less than two hundred years ago is, after all, a meaningless struggle? It is far from it, and just the contrary. Every seer and prophet of whom we have any record looked forward to what was begun by the Declaration of Independence, confirmed by the Constitution, and set forth in the heraldry of the United States of America.

No, what we are trying to make clear now is that to have true vision is to be free, even though the greater part of mankind suffers the pains consequent to ignorance. Free from most of the disabilities which burden the rank and file of humanity. Free from want, disease, and fear. Free from death itself. No **system** confers this freedom. It comes from our **inner** consciousness, not from outside.

Key 4, like all the Tarot keys, speaks to you in picture language. We all know this language even though our surface consciousness may not be aware of this fact. This Key, again like all the Keys, brings you a mighty Truth, a great and comforting message. It tells you that **now** and not at some future time, you are the master of all your circumstances and environmental conditions.

No matter what appearances to the contrary there may be, the truth is that your personal world, just as it presents itself to you at this very moment, is the world you have made for yourself. You may not like it, but you made it. Because you made it, you are able to remold it as Omar said, "nearer to the heart's desire."

The same Omar knew, and said, that they who remold worlds must begin by shattering them to bits. Key 4 will help you to do this and here is one of the lessons to be learned from the strong Mars quality pictured by this image of the Emperor.

True vision and right definition destroy before they build. Thus Eliphas Levi taught that he who knows how to direct the currents of the Great Magical Agent (pictured by the Fool) "can reduce the world to a chaos and transform its face."

The false world of an ignorant man's tortured fancy does not actually exist. It has no more reality than any other nightmare. Yet we have all experienced bad dreams and know how dreadfully acute may be their fancied terrors. Use Key 4 to wake you from the dream that you are a slave to circumstance . . . to free you from the delusion that anything you have thought, or said, or done in days gone by can rob you of your heritage of freedom. This picture of a monarch ruling all his, kingdom is a true portrait of your own real Self. Let it bring to the surface of your mind the knowledge of whom and what you really are.

KEY 5. THE HIEROPHANT

The number 5 sits in the middle of the row of numerals from 1 to 9. Occupying this middle place, it suggests intervention, mediation, and similar ideas. A mediator serves as a link between two opposing groups. In Tarot, Key 5 is such a link between four pairs of pictures--1 and 9, 2 and 8, 3 and 7, and 4 and 6. In later courses you will learn more about this.

The letter Vav ו , printed on Key 5, has the same suggestions. Its name means "nail" or "hook". Thus it indicates: 1. What joins together the parts of a whole, as nails unite the parts of a house; 2. What serves to suspend a hanging object, as a hook supports a picture. The grammatical use of Vav in Hebrew is based on the meanings of the name of the letter. Vav serves the same purpose as the English conjunction "and". It links together a series of nouns and serves also as the hook, or support, from which hang the dependent clauses of a sentence.

The function associated with Vav is Hearing. This refers primarily to ordinary physical sensation because hearing is truly the principal link between one human mind and another. In these days we hear through our eyes, one might say, because the Western world uses symbols for sounds in all its printed texts. This is not so in China and Japan. Hence in lands dominated by Chinese picture-writing the written word is far more potent than the spoken.

Physical hearing, however, is not the only meaning of Vav. This letter stands for a more important function. This is the interior hearing whereby we may know the Voice of the true Self pictured here by the Hierophant.

In our B.O.T.A. texts, we always use a capital "V" when writing of this Voice. It must be distinguished from the "voices" which come from other minds or from discarnate entities on the astral plane. We are far from discounting the value of interior communication with

other entities whether they are incarnate or discarnate. Yet none of these "voices", however wise may be their counsel, is the Voice.

As one has written, this is a Voice which speaks where there is none to speak. It is the Voice of the **One Self** and the knowledge and wisdom it imparts have no tinge of human fallibility. Thus the type of consciousness to which Key 5 corresponds, as the table on page 48 of HIGHLIGHTS tells you, is named "The Triumphant and Eternal Intelligence". Triumphant, because its counsel always helps us overcome some obstacle, or avoid some danger, or transform some seemingly adverse circumstance into friendly cooperation with our efforts. It is Eternal, because this counsel is based always on eternal principles. Never is it merely a thing of the moment.

Simply to open our inner ears is not enough. There are enemies as well as friends of man on the astral plane. Because mischief-makers, also, who delight in perplexing and confusing those who listen to their voices. Yet they always betray themselves by certain characteristics.

First of all, they flatter. Subtly and in just the ways to which one is most susceptible. They flatter by "revealing" mysteries which, they say, are hidden from the rest of the world. One of their most common forms of deception is to make supposed revelations of the details of former incarnations.

For those of grosser wits, they say, "Once you were Cleopatra," or Napoleon, or some other prominent figure in history. To others, though they do not resort to such open flattery, they find the way to domination by revelations of supposed incarnations, not particularly striking in seeming to render plausible the idea that one's present shortcomings are a natural outcome of former lives, and therefore to be condoned.

The purpose of such supposed revelations is to establish the hearer's confidence in those who give the communications. Their sources of information are tremendous. It is not generally known that only the limitations of physical embodiment conceal our past experiences from others. They who live on the astral plane, and use the astral senses, can read our lives from the cradle onward.

Names, dates, even our private thoughts and feelings, are engraved on what is pictured in Tarot as the scroll of the High Priestess--and this record is an open book to many inhabitants of the astral plane. Thus the accuracy of any spirit's revelation of your past is by no means a guarantee of his good faith, nor of his ability to guide you in the present toward a successful future. Some such entities are well-meaning and beneficent, but a man does not become a Master simply by shedding his physical envelope. Lots of well-meaning persons here give very bad advice, and they keep on giving it when they pass to the "other side".

Whenever you hear a voice demanding that you shall obey its orders, stop your ears. The Voice **never** demands, **never** flatters, and **never** says anything to increase your sense of self-importance. Furthermore, every principle it announces may be checked by reason. Sometimes the revelations of the Voice go beyond reason and beyond ordinary experience. Yet in no single instance do they run counter to reason and they meet the tests of investigation.

The general meaning of Key 5, then, is summed up in the word intuition, in the sense of "inside tuition", or "interior teaching". In the symbols of this Key we find all we need to know in order to distinguish genuine intuitions from baseless feelings which echo our own emotional states and give form to our ignorance.

It is logical for Key 5 to follow Key 4. Genuine intuition is not a substitute for reason. It is a logical **consequence** of good reasoning. It does not teach the lazy-minded. Whenever a person tells you he does not need to study because intuition tells him everything he needs to know, he is usually a liar. Certainly he deceives himself. The Inner Teacher wastes no time in fruitless endeavors to instruct the incompetents who will not take the trouble to observe, to remember, to imagine, and to reason.

Thus the ministers kneeling before their teacher wear garments which are embroidered with the same flowers that appear in the garden of the Magician. They represent personal acquisitions of knowledge (lilies) and personal development and cultivation of desires (roses).

There are echoes in the symbolism, also, of what is portrayed in the picture of the High Priestess. Like her, the Hierophant sits between two pillars in a temple. Like her, he has a lunar symbol prominently displayed. Even the ornaments on the back of his throne have some resemblance to her crown, though they are intended primarily to represent the zodiacal sign Taurus.

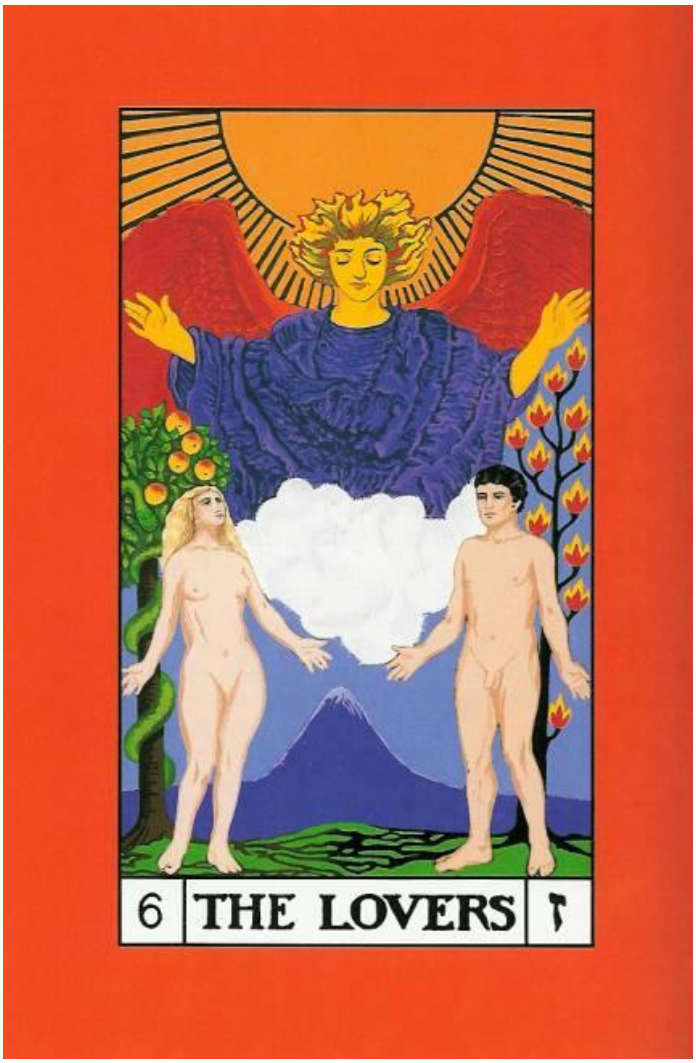
Actually, the Emperor and the Hierophant are the same. The difference between them is in their spheres of operation. In Key 4, all the emphasis is on the objective, external world from which man gathers experience. In Key 5, the emphasis is on the inner realm whence man gains his wisdom and his knowledge of the significance of what goes on round him. These are often called **two** worlds. Actually they are just the outside and the inside of **one** world. The one is not more real, nor truer, than the other. More than this, either realm, taken by itself, is incomplete, and, to that extent, is really false.

They are in error that suppose the world outside, reported to us through our senses, and is the only **real** world. Not less mistaken are they who deny reality to the objective universe and fly from it into the inner realms. The outer world is devoid of meaning apart from the inner one. The wisdom of the inner world is Dead Sea fruit unless it is put to use and service in the realm outside.

Besides looking at the Hierophant, then, and calling up his image whenever you are confronted by a problem to which you can find no solution after you have done all you can in the way of observing, remembering, imagining, and reasoning, practice the **listening** attitude of mind. The Voice never speaks loud and you will fail to hear it until you have learned to silence the clamor of your own thinking, most of which is merely talking to yourself.

Just take your problem to the One Teacher and listen to what He may have to say. This does not mean that you will, necessarily, hear an audible voice, especially in the beginning of your practice. Later on, if you persist, you will really **hear** the Voice, and, having had the experience once, you will never mistake the Voice for the "voices".
The fundamental practice is to be still when you wish the counsel of the Voice. Stop racking your brains when a seemingly insoluble problem confronts you. The harder you try, the less likely are you to hear the answer. For in Key 5 there is a strong element of what is pictured by the High Priestess and the same need for quiet calmness.

The reason behind this is that every great principle, every eternal truth, is already part of the wisdom of true Self. Intuition is really a sort of recollection. It **brings up** treasures of wisdom buried deep in the race subconsciousness. More than this, it brings **down new treasures from the super-consciousness above the personal level of self-conscious awareness. Always the price of these revelations is silence. You cannot listen if you are talking to yourself.**



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Four

KEY 6. THE LOVERS

Nails fasten things together. Swords cut them apart. Thus there is a contrast between the letter printed on the Lovers and that which is assigned to the Hierophant. The latter is, basically, a symbol of union. The fundamental idea expressed by Zain ז, "the sword", is division.

The scene in Key 6, again, is, in several respects, is an antithesis to that of Key 5. As in Key 5, there are three principal figures, but the superior one--the angel--makes a contrast to the Hierophant; and the two below him, by obvious implication Adam and Eve in their garden, are nude, whereas the ministers kneeling before the Hierophant are clad in ceremonial vestments. Furthermore, the ministers in Key 5 face inward toward the Hierophant, with their backs toward the observer of the picture, and away from the background, where the sun is at its midmorning position in the East.

The principal lesson of this Key is of importance to all who wish to make best use of their powers. In simple terms it is this: Superconsciousness (the angel) sheds its influence impartially upon both self-consciousness (the man) and subconsciousness (the woman). In spite of the ancient philosophical terminology which makes subconsciousness seem to be what Orientals call the "inferior" nature while self-consciousness is termed the "superior", these two are coequal.

That is, they are fundamentally so; but when these two aspects of the personal nature of man come under the "curse" mentioned in the allegory of the Fall, the woman then becomes subject to her husband. Her restoration to her rightful place of equality is one of the great practical works of Ageless Wisdom.

Despite the miseries, which St. Paul's theological interpretation of the allegory of The Fall has visited on womankind throughout the Western world, there is a great truth in the allegory itself. Subconsciousness is always amenable to suggestion, and, unless rightly directed by self-consciousness, falls easily under the sway of the appearances and illusions having their source in physical sensation.

These appearances and illusions are pictured in Key 6 as the serpent coiled round the tree behind the woman, and the tree has five fruits, in reference to the life of the physical senses, which seem so attractive to those who yield to its temptations. It is not that the life of sensation is in itself evil, but, from beginning to end, all that man knows by sensation consists of pairs of opposites-good and evil, as the Bible allegory puts it. Such knowledge is of no value whatever as a means for wise self-direction. It has a specious appearance of being useful, but the error of those who believe they can make out a successful course in life by making themselves familiar with all the pairs of opposites is that nobody can possibly acquire this knowledge.

As the allegory of The Fall puts it, Adam and Eve were perfectly happy so long as they were obedient to the Lord. When they listened to the serpent, they found themselves in trouble right away.

The "Lord" is the personification of super-consciousness, pictured in Key 6 as the Angel. So long as the personal life is under the direction of that truly superior aspect of Being, all goes well. Just as soon as the connection with super-consciousness is broken by mistaken endeavors to plan one's life in accordance with the reports of physical sensation, all goes wrong.

Remember, the "Lord" is not an outside ruler who imposes his will on human beings. There is no such ruler. For though the true Self is, in one sense, superior to any human being, and has an existence which extends far beyond the limits of any human personality, that same Self is the innermost reality at the core of every single human life. By depending on that, and on that only, for guidance and sustenance, one's life is regulated and arranged from a level superior to the best results of self-conscious reasoning and superior to the best which subconsciousness can imagine.

Key 6, then, pictures the situation, which is the logical consequence of the steps pictured by the Keys preceding it. When the Magician is consciously related to what is above him, every pattern he makes (symbolized by the arrangement of his implements on the table before him) is a good one. From this it follows that the record on the scroll of the High Priestess is clear and definite; and then the mental imagery produced by subconsciousness is the good wheat in the Empress' garden.

Under such conditions, the Emperor is no petty tyrant, but is really so completely identified with the **One Self** that every conscious state of him who maintains this relationship with the superconscious Self is so imbued with the influence from above that, to all intents and

purposes, what theology calls "God" acts directly through that personality. Thus it is that the Emperor, though he is just the Magician in another guise, is also one with the Fool, and is therefore pictured with a single eye and a white beard, in subtle reference to occult representations of the Ancient of Days. His clear vision is supplemented, and its true significance is made manifest, by the Voice of the Hierophant. Thus it follows that the happy state of balanced and harmonious relationship pictured by the Lovers is brought about.

The two human figures in Key 6 are nude, not only because the symbolism is derived from the allegory of Adam and Eve, but also because they conceal nothing from each other. Just as a man and woman who love have no shame, and no secrets from one another, so the two aspects of human personal consciousness, when they stand in correct relation to super-consciousness, have none of the concealments which are too often characteristic of the relation between these of same two aspects of personality in the greater number of men and women.

In a later Key we shall see a picture of the destruction of false knowledge. One of its striking features is a catastrophe affecting two people, both fully clothed. The average person is in disguise. His words and face say one thing. His inner thoughts say something very different. He is always "putting on an act" but he himself is the most deluded victim of his pretenses.

This sort of play-acting is precisely what is meant by the word "hypocrisy", and the woes Jesus pronounced on hypocrites must not be misunderstood as being punishments inflicted on them by Jesus, or anyone else. The miseries which they suffer are logical consequences of conflicts in their own minds. Being full of guile, they cannot be members of the spiritual Israel. Guile is evidence of the person's own self-deception. Since the literal meaning of "Israel" is "He shall rule as God", only one in whose life everything is under the divine guidance pictured by the Angel in Key 6 can be free from guile.

Certainly no human being may hope to play God successfully, though many attempt this impossibility. Yet he who deliberately surrenders his personal life to superconscious direction becomes an immediate agent of the only God there is. In this connection it may be noted that the name of the disciple who was called "an Israelite indeed", because of his freedom from guile, is given in the Gospel as Nathaniel, which, in Hebrew, means "gift of God".

In picture language, then, Key 6 gives to your subconsciousness a definite suggestion, which has tremendous and far-reaching consequences. It says:

"The two aspects of human personality are different, but equal. One is not 'better' than the other. Each has its own special powers and its own special field of operation. It is not the office of self-consciousness to tyrannize over subconsciousness like an old-fashioned husband. Nor is it the part of subconsciousness, as some silly pseudo-psychologists suppose, to take charge.

"These two must have no concealments. They must leave one another free to carry out their own particular types of activity. Self-consciousness observes the objective world and gathers acts as the connecting link between self-consciousness and subconsciousness.

“It is through subconsciousness that our contact with the Voice of the Hierophant is established. It is through subconscious channels that we arrive at understanding of **significance.** It is also through subconsciousness that new ideas and new mental imagery come into manifestation."

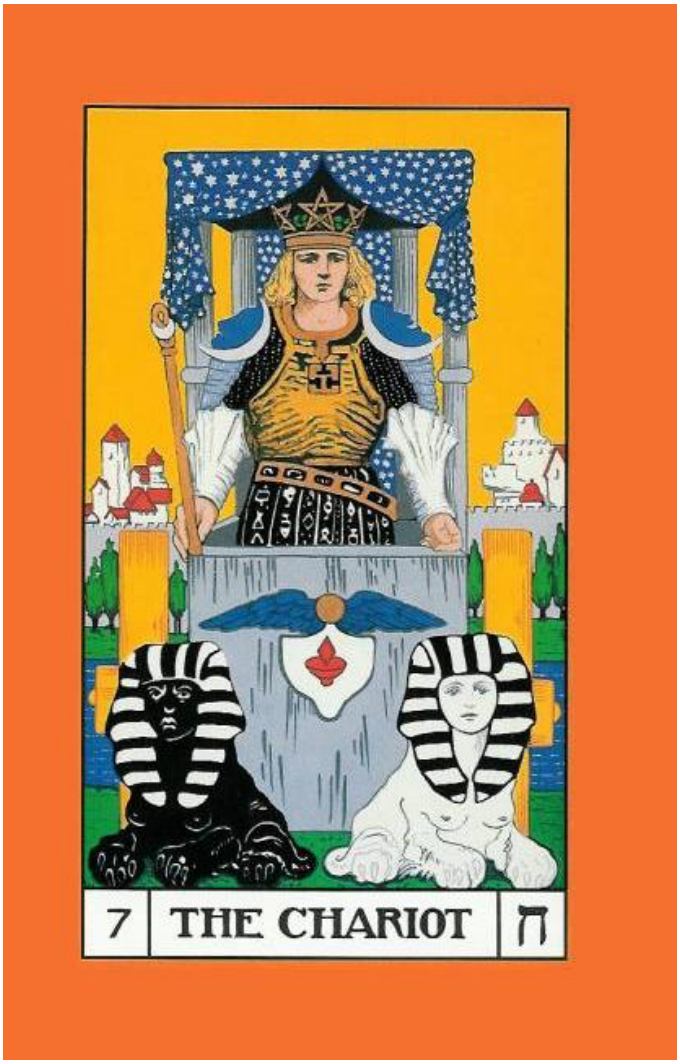
More might be said along the same lines, but we bring this introduction to Key 6 to a close with a practical suggestion. After looking at this Key, and absorbing as much of its meaning as you can with the aid of what has been said in this lesson, use your ingenuity to frame a special message to your own personal subconsciousness. Let the words be your very own, but let the central idea be this:

"From now on, subconsciousness, you are no longer amenable to suggestions framed by me at the level of my personal self-consciousness, unless those suggestions are confirmed by super-consciousness. You are free from the errors of the misinterpretations I have made in the past.”

The effect of this deliberate, reasoned surrender of all personal domination over your subconsciousness is by no means the same as turning over your personal life to the vagaries of subconsciousness. The results may not be apparent immediately, yet, in the long run, you will find that all conflicts between your subconsciousness and your self-consciousness are cleared up. You will find yourself experiencing, day after day, the wonderful and beneficent results of superconscious guidance.

This does not mean you will never make mistakes. Your self-conscious mind has limits. It is fallible. That you may gain skill in using it, you are left free to make errors of various kinds. Guidance will not turn you into a puppet.

What is avoided by this suggestion and its consequences is the echoing, or reverberation, of such mistakes through your subsequent history. When the subconscious mind knows that it is not to accept as premises for elaboration any opinions or commands of self-consciousness unless it has also received confirmation for them from super-consciousness, the consequences of our superficial errors are easy to overcome, and easy to correct.



KEY 7. THE CHARIOT

A sword is primarily a weapon of offence. Again, as a cutting instrument, it is related to such ideas as division, separation, partition, and the like. In contrast to these ideas connected with the letter Zain are those related to the letter Cheth ח, the name of which is the Hebrew noun for "an enclosure, a fence". These include such contrasts to offence and separation as defense, protection, inclusion, and the like. The primitive character for this letter, surviving in the English alphabet almost without change as the capital letter "H", was a crude picture of a fence or palisade.

Again, to Zain and the Lovers the sign Gemini is attributed, and the astrological symbol ♊ suggests separation; but to Cheth the sign Cancer, the Crab, is attributed. All the astrological meanings of Gemini relate to ideas of separation, distinction, discrimination and classification, and in the human body this, sign is said to govern the hands, arms, shoulders and lungs--all in pairs. In contrast, astrological interpretations of Cancer stress its protective, sheltering and shielding characteristics, and in the human organism, the mammary glands, which nourish babies, and the bony wall of the chest, which protects stomach, lungs and heart, are said to be governed by Cancer.

From most ancient times, the number 7 has been held in special veneration. It has certain peculiar mathematical properties, which were noted by Pythagoras and other Greek philosophers, who named 7 Phylactics, in reference to its supposed protective powers.

The scene in Key 7 presents many contrasts to the Lovers. Key 6 shows everything in a state of nature. The human figures are nude. They stand in open country, and their surroundings show no trace of human invention or human handicraft. Key 7 multiplies the "fence" idea in various ways. In the background is a city, surrounded by a stone wall. At the foot of the wall is a river, which is another defense to protect the inhabitants of the town. In the foreground, the chariot is a portable fence, and the rider wears armor, which protects his body--

especially his chest—against injury. Furthermore, to confirm the attribution of this Key to the sign Cancer bears a lunar crescent, and the Moon is the ruler of Cancer.

Close examination will show that the face in the crescent at the left of the picture is forbidding and severe, while that on the other side wears a smiling, benign expression. A similar contrast is shown in the faces of the two sphinxes crouching before the car.
In Key 6, the two human figures stand apart, though they do receive equal influences from the angel overhead. In Key 7, the two lunar masks are joined by the rider's body, and the two sphinxes are a team united in drawing the car. What is here intended is emphasis on the idea that Key 7 represents the unification and reconciliation of opposites.

In Key 6, the stress is on the antithesis presented by the two figures, male and female. In Key 7, the idea of synthesis is prominent in every part of the design. Furthermore, this synthesis is one which is achieved by human agency.

Psychologically, one of the meanings of Key 6 is discrimination; but all the meanings of Key 7 have to do with the synthesis of the various principles we have been considering up to this point. That synthesis is **Will.**

Ageless Wisdom declares unequivocally that an absolutely free will is part of the make-up of every human being. Yet it is equally emphatic in its denial that there is any such thing as a separate power of volition peculiar to each human being.

According to this doctrine, the only **Will** there is in the universe is what exoteric theology calls "the will of God". Yet the esoteric doctrine is a sharp variance from the exoteric fancy that any man has a will of his own which he can oppose to the will of God. When any man supposes himself to be possessed of such personal free will, he is suffering from a fundamental delusion.

In Key 7, one symbol of the esoteric doctrine of will is the river. It flows into the picture from outside, and flows out again. In like manner, the power we feel inside ourselves as that which we exercise in acts of volition, is not something having its source in our personality, but something which flows through the field of personal existence. The word "vehicle", a synonym for "chariot", is, in fact, the clue to the whole esoteric conception of the function of human personality and to the esoteric doctrine of will. **Persons** are instruments and agencies of the **One Life.** Persons originate neither themselves nor their actions. That they do not originate themselves is a matter of daily observation, yet many do not see how contradictory it is to suppose that a personality, which is obviously the end product of a series of antecedent causes reaching far back into the past, should, in some strange fashion, have absolute free will of its own.

Do not mistake our meaning. We repeat that Ageless Wisdom insists on the reality of free will as a true component in the make-up of every human being. None of the modern doctrines of determinism, which make man a mere reaction mechanism responding

automatically to various external stimuli, receive any confirmation from the true esoteric doctrine. Our denial of the personal element in free will is no denial of man's essentially free power of volition. What we are saying really is that the **person** is not the **man**-that the person is, as the very word person indicates, only a mask, or agency, or vehicle, **through** which the spiritual **Man** finds expression.

In Tarot, thus far, the **Man** has been symbolized by the dominant figure in each Key. The **Man** is the Fool, the Magician, the High Priestess, the Empress, the Emperor, the Hierophant, the Angel over the Lovers, and the Rider in the chariot. The **person** is represented by the Magician's implements, his robes, and the flowers in his garden. So it is throughout the series. Those element in any Tarot picture which relate to personality are always subordinate-as the scroll of the High Priestess, the roses, wheat and shield of the Empress, the domain of the Emperor, the ministers kneeling before the Hierophant, and the two Lovers. If this be kept in mind, the inner meaning of Tarot will be more and more clearly revealed to you as you continue using it. For the whole purpose of these Keys may be summed up as Self-revelation, as a psychological training which will enable you to live in intimate contact with the **Self,** and to experience the beneficent consequences of this union.

Thus receptivity is the personal attitude indicated by this Key 7. The main purpose of a chariot is to contain its rider and that of a fence is to contain the field it surrounds. The field is not physically separate from the land outside. The wall is only a superficial and artificial means for setting apart a portion of the whole surface of the land for certain specific uses. Similarly, human persons are like fenced fields. They are not really separate. More than most of us realize, these walls which seem to set us apart from our neighbors are **artificial.** Little children are usually unaware of them. It is education and training which have erected most of these high barriers that hem us in.

Here again, because our education begins at a time antecedent to our earliest memories, we fail to realize that much of our seeming isolation is due to habits and attitudes imposed on us by parents and other elders. They who become highly proficient in occult training have to break down many of these "fences".

When they succeed in doing this, they regain the use of powers which are man's rightful heritage. This is why we have insisted so often that occult training will not give you new powers. Rather will it restore to you powers which you did exercise in early childhood, but have now forgotten.

For example, little children are in telepathic communications with their parents. Every observant mother has innumerable evidences of this-but **observant** mothers are few. Most of them fail to grasp the significance of what is clearly indicated by much of the behavior of infants. Yet every practitioner of spiritual healing knows that the quickest way to heal a baby is to treat it though its mother.

In fact, most of the higher powers which we suppose to be unusual seem to be so because our faulty training has stifled them. Actually, we are all able to communicate with other persons irrespective of the physical spaces which seem to separate us. We are truly omnipresent because the true **Man at the heart of every human personality is none other than God.**

That the true Man is the real and only source of free will is what we must learn, and when we come to understand this fully and deeply, we shall know how to bring into effective action powers which now seem to be far beyond our present abilities.

To the beneficent wisdom of men and women who themselves regained the child state the race appears to have lost, we owe all we know of Ageless Wisdom. To them, who have become as little children, we are indebted for this marvel, the Tarot.

INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Five

KEY 8. STRENGTH

Key 8 takes us back to nature, away from the associations of human artifice connected with Key 7. The letter attributed to this picture is **ט,** Teth, meaning "serpent". Thus in Key 8 there is an echo of what we have seen before in Key 6 where a woman and a serpent were parts of the design.

In early manuscripts, the letter Teth looks like a snake with its head turned to the left and its tail curled up over its back. Some trace of this persists in the modern form of the letter printed above. Thus this letter and its Tarot Key are evidently related to the exceedingly complex serpent symbolism we find in so many forms throughout the literature of Ageless Wisdom.

All symbolic associations of the serpent with evil, temptation, antagonism to God or man, and the like, are to be understood as having to do with the results of man's ignorant misuse of a force which, because it has a wavy motion, and also because it is spiral, or coiling, is typified by the serpent. Yet this same force is the instrument of man's liberation whenever he understands it and uses it aright.

On this account two principal symbols of this force-the snake and the lion-appear in the Bible as emblems of the Adversary, and also as types of the Redeemer. Exoteric theology makes the mistake of supposing the Redeemer and the Adversary are two irreconcilable antagonists. He who can read between the lines by following the many hints given in the Bible, will discover the truth that the same force which the wise employ to realize freedom from every kind of bondage is also the same force which, ill-directed, causes all human misery.

Snakes are almost universally feared and so is the power they symbolize. They are dangerous to man and often cause his death, yet it has been discovered recently that the venom of the cobra has good uses which man never suspected so long as he yielded to his natural instinct to kill snakes on sight. Similarly, the force the serpent symbolizes is extremely dangerous, and, in some instances, a deadly poison. Thus it is natural that all exoteric religions make the snake a symbol for the devil.

This is one reason the Bible puts emphasis on the danger of denying the actual existence of the devil. It warns us repeatedly against the falsity of the easy optimism, which believes itself to be protected against all adversity by the silly, childish expedient of declaring that the adversary does not exist.

All talk of victory is empty unless there is a real antagonist to overcome. Even a game of bridge would be meaningless were there no opposing sides. So, when we come to deal with the manifold problems of human life, nothing can be more ridiculous than to believe we may escape danger by pretending it does not exist. We never can solve problems by refusing to face them.

Neither may we solve them by vain endeavors to **destroy** their causes. Like poisonous snakes, or poisonous weeds, the causes of evil are to be overcome, and to overcome an adversary is to make him an ally.

Thus the message of Key 8 is of particular importance to all lovers of freedom and justice. It tells us that the enemy, though dangerous as a deadly serpent or a roaring lion, may be transformed into a powerful ally.

In Key 6, the serpent of temptation is coiled round the tree behind Eve. In Key 8, the same force is pictured as a red lion, but now tamed by the woman who opens his mouth. That is to say, she makes him articulate, and gives him speech. The idea here is that whenever we understand any seemingly adverse power, we can tame it and make it an instrument whereby we shall be able to express and realize our human aspirations.

Step by step, the progress of science brings the dumb, brute forces of nature under the control of human thought, **expressed in words.** For millenniums, lightning was only a type of swift death, and thunder was mistaken for the voice of an angry God. Today the same lightning carries the human voice in a flash to every part of the world and has endowed human speech with the universal reverberation and success, which Eliphas Levi prophesied when he wrote of what would occur when men began to master the subtle force symbolized by the letter Teth, and by the lion in Key 8.

The law is simple. It is the law that subconsciousness is always, and completely, amenable to control by suggestions originating at the level of self-consciousness. In Key 8 this is intimated by the fact that the woman wears a white robe similar to that worn by the Magician and has over her head the same horizontal figure 8, which is shown in Key 1.

All that we mean by **substance**, as applied to the basic material from which the variety of forms in our environment is built up, has been demonstrated in our physical laboratories to be "nothing but" radiant energy, fundamentally electromagnetic. This streams from our sun to provide physical energy for our entire world-system.

Out of this energy are built all the complex things surrounding us. As we now understand it, this energy is mass of tiny particles or waves moving at terrific rates of speed.

The fundamental particles are all alike. The electrons, protons, neutrons, etc. in an atom of lead differ in no particular from those in an atom of gold. Those which enter into the composition of your body are no different from those which make up the materials of the walls of your house or the stones and cement of the sidewalks.

Every form taken by this energy in our terrestrial environment is a form of life and is therefore a form of consciousness. Exoteric science is not quite ready to admit this, but comes nearer every year. Ageless Wisdom has declared it from time immemorial. Everything is alive. Inorganic as Well as organic forms are built from this "vital electricity" which certain Oriental occultists call Fohat and which Madame Blavatsky declared to be represented by the letter Teth.

Wherever there is life, there is some degree of consciousness. The consciousness latent in minerals and vegetables appears to us to be unconsciousness, but the best reports of the wise repudiate the term **unconsciousness**, and for this reason we use the word subconsciousness to designate levels of awareness below that of human awareness of a Self, or Ego. The law we have mentioned on page 2 says that every level of consciousness below that of human self-consciousness responds invariably and automatically to suggestions originating at the level of self-consciousness.

Put very simply, this means that the energy, which takes form as everything in our environment day be controlled directly by our mental processes. Through his thought and imagination, man may impose his will upon whatever surrounds him.

He may do this indirectly by imagining various combinations of things outside his body. Yet even here it is the human mind, which perceives the possibilities of such combinations after careful observation of what goes on in some field of investigation.

Machines are thought-forms materialized by human imagination. Just as a chair is the projection into physical manifestation of man's idea of sitting, so is an airplane a projection of his thought of flying. When man imagines truly, as a result of following out the steps outlined in Tarot by Keys 0 to 7, the whole of nature responds to his ideas and brings him a greater measure of freedom, a greater command of the things and forces surrounding his body.

There are men and women who have progressed beyond this indirect control of the astral light. They use various instruments for their works of power, and some of the instruments have no obvious connection with the results attained.

Tarot is one such instrument. This introduction is but the beginning of a series of steps which will lead persevering students to a point where they will be able to utilize this extraordinary device to produce specific results affecting the physical conditions of their environment... results which would seem to be utter impossibilities were we foolish enough to enumerate some of them here. Yet, because Tarot unfolds the deeper, latent powers of subconsciousness, it is one of several means whereby you may be brought to that state of skilful self-direction Eliphas Levi had in mind when, writing of the astral light, he said: "The will of intelligent beings acts directly on this light, and by means thereof, upon all nature, which is made subject to the modifications of intelligence."

Because the inner meaning of Key 8 leads to some of the most important practical secrets of occultism, we are cautious in our exposition of this picture. Yet one point we do wish to emphasize. A chain of roses leads the lion and the roses mean just what they mean in Key 1 and 3. They are symbols of desire and this is **cultivated** desire. What is meant by the fact that in Key 8 they are woven into a chain, is that the subconscious levels of the activity of the cosmic radiant energy are to be controlled by trained, systematic, coherent use of **related** desires, expressed in clear images.

Looking at Key 8 will evoke from your inner consciousness a realization of the truth that you are now in touch with an inexhaustible and always available source of power. Simple as the picture is, it tells you the truth about your relation to all the forces which constitute your environment. It tells you that what ignorance dreads and fears as a malignant adversary is really your most potent ally.

As you use it, it will evoke the mood of courage and confidence. For beginners, this is the most important practical application of Key 8. Try it and you will find that whenever you are depressed, or a little bit frightened by some appearance in your personal world, a glimpse of this picture will raise your spirits and dispel your fears.

KEY 9. THE HERMIT

A snake belongs to the subhuman, animal kingdom. But the letter י , Yod, printed on Key 9, represents the hand of man. Thus the power we see symbolized as a lion in Key 8 is shown on a wide plain with a mountain peak in the background; but the Hermit in Key 9 stands at the summit of that same peak. He is male in contrast to the woman of Key 8. The scene is also a contrast to the sunlit landscape of Key 8, for the Hermit stands holding a lantern to light the way for travelers toiling up the path toward the height.

9, the number of this Key, has certain properties like those of 0. Multiply any number by 0, and 0 is always the result. Multiply any number by 9, and the product will be always a number having digits, which add to 9. Even the shape of the figure is derived from the zero sign, and, as ordinarily written, 9 is simply a zero with a tail, usually a straight line, like the figure 1.

Thus, though his outward appearance is different, we find the Hermit on a mountain, like the Fool. The Fool, however, fixes his gaze on a height ahead of him. The Hermit looks down, as if surveying a path leading upward from the depths whence he climbed.

This Key pictures solitude, but not loneliness. Superiority, too, because the Hermit is on a high peak and his beard, like that of the Emperor, symbolizes experience. So does the number 9, because it is the last of the series of numerals. 9 typifies completion, and completion applied to human life is the attainment of adeptship and mastery. Thus we may understand that Key 9 is the Tarot symbol of the perfected state of human consciousness.

This perfected state is that of union with the **One Self.** It is the state of identification with the **Master** power, which is meant whenever the Scriptures speak of the "Hand of God". Adepts and masters are, in very truth, "God's Hands". So are we, but we are far from being steadily aware of this truth. We are like the hands of little children, full of potentiality, but wanting in practical skill. We have the powers, but we are, as yet, deficient in training.

Yet, even in our relative inefficiency, we are God's hands. For every work of man, whether it done or in ignorance, is a direct transformation of power descending from the **One Self.**

This is what the rays of the Hermit's lantern signify. Every man and woman on this planet is connected with the One Self by a ray of the cosmic light. None of us, lives or moves, but by this power. All personal action is really a response to impulses coming down to us from this "Father of Lights".

Thus the supreme conscious attainment is the realization that the **One Self** is also the **Only Self**. "Persons" seem to be separate, and think they have separate "selves". Yet he who really knows the **Self** knows there is no other. This is why Key 9, representing, among other things, the completion of human attainment, shows an old man standing alone.

The zodiacal sign attributed to Yod is Virgo, the sixth sign, and the six-pointed star in the lantern is an allusion to the number of this sign in the zodiacal series. In ancient pictorial representations, Virgo was often shown as a woman holding a distaff and a sheaf of wheat. This was an allusion to the fact that the human body is woven, so to speak, from threads spun in the small intestine, which, say the astrologers, is governed by Virgo.

It is in this region that our food (symbolized by the sheaf of wheat) is changed into the basic substance from, which the blood is charged with the materials needed for the repair and functioning of our bodies. As we shall explain in greater detail, in lessons, which follow this course in the B.O.T.A. curriculum, the heights of adeptship are reached as a result of minute alterations in the chemistry and structure of the physical body of man.

Outwardly, an adept looks like any other member of the human race; but his blood is different, his organs function better, and what are rudimentary structures in most human skulls are fully functioning organs in the brain of a fully liberated master of life. The place where the fundamental difference between an adept's body and that of an ordinary man is determined is in the region governed by Virgo.

This sign is ruled by Mercury, and in Tarot, Mercury is the Magician. What this means is that it is possible, by intelligent control of the body-building process, to effect great changes in the chemistry of the blood and in the functions of various physical organs. Basically, the making of such changes depends:

1. On conscious knowledge of the use of self-consciousness for the right selection of food;

2. On the use of the law pictured in Key 8 to transfer to subconsciousness the pattern of a higher and finer type of physical organism.

The most important lesson of Key 9 is summed up in the word response. It is the lesson we must learn, that no act of human personality is self-originated. Perhaps a play on words may help you grasp the idea. No act of personality originates in what most persons mean when they say "self '. All acts of personality are truly **Self**-originated, because they have their source in the over-shadowing life of the **One Self**.

Just as the Hermit, looking down, sees those who are climbing toward him, so the **One Self enters into the lives of us all**. To ourselves we seem to be struggling upward and few of us seem to be aware of any light from above; but the **One Self** knows all its personal manifestations and works through every one to bring about that person's conscious union with the Supreme.

We have said before that no human being is a puppet. Because all our personal activity is rooted in the freedom of the One Life, this freedom enters into all that we are or do. We misinterpret and misunderstand it, but we are correct in our instinctive belief in free will. For this responsive quality in all human action does not mean response to something outside, or to something other than ourselves. It is a personal reaction to our true, innermost nature.

The Hermit on his peak stands at the center of a great circle. His horizon is wider than that of any of the travelers toiling up toward him. The paths on one side of the mountain are different from those on the opposite side, and seem to be going in opposite directions. Yet they all meet in one place. So do the various paths of human attainment differ in details, and differ also in apparent direction.

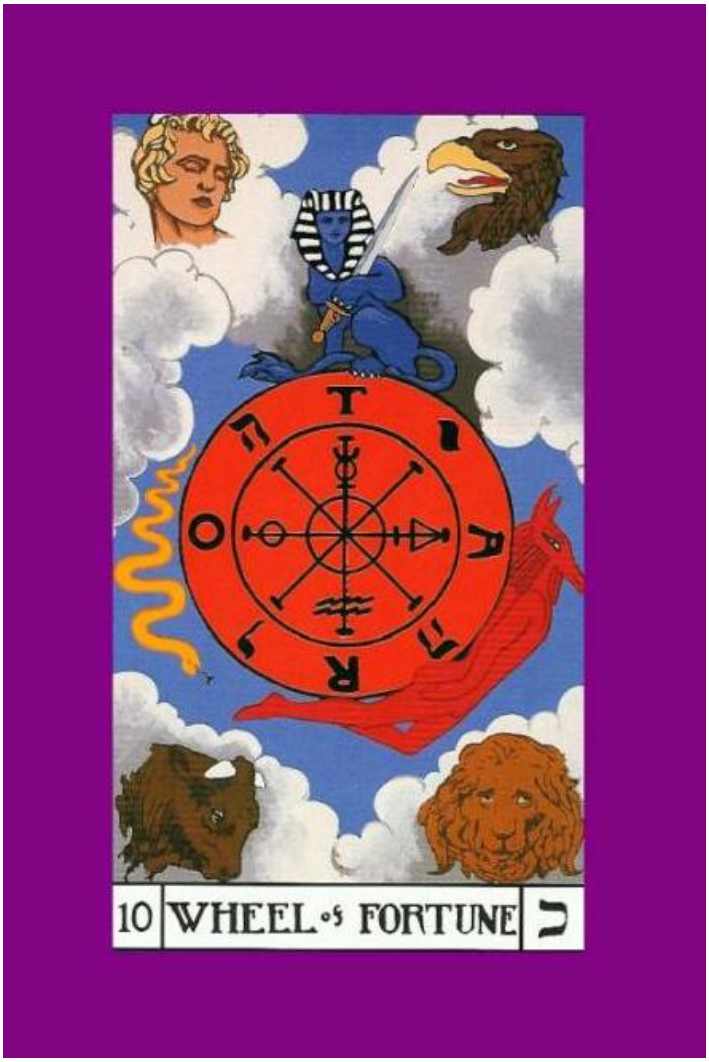
No Two are precisely the same, yet all lead to the same goal. That goal is conscious identification with the one and only **Self**. That goal we are all destined to reach. For the power which is expressed in the life of every human being is the power of that **One Self**, and this power, the power of omnipotence itself, can never fail to perfect every least detail of its work.

Lost souls there may be if by "lost" we mean, "having lost one's way". Yet sooner or later the light of the Hermit’s lantern will be a beacon to bring the wanderers back to the Path; and the better we understand Ageless Wisdom, the more does it become evident that even the wanderers are never really out of contact with the Eternal Light-bearer.

Use Key 9 to remind you that your true **Self is, even now, all that your personal mind hopes and longs to be. Use it to deepen your understanding of the truth that there is never a moment when you are not under the watchful supervision of that same great "I AM".**

Use it also to convey to your subconsciousness the deep practical lesson we have lightly touched upon in speaking of the building of a finer body. At this point in your study, you would most likely be confused by elaborate explanation of the process.

Your subconsciousness, however, understands every detail of the meaning of this Tarot Key and will respond to it by beginning to build the finer body you require.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Six

KEY 10. THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE

The letter Kaph כ represents the hand of man closed in the act of grasping. Thus it is in contrast to Yod which represents the function of man's hand as the most delicate organ of touch.

To grasp is to take possession. To grasp anything with the mind is to become thoroughly conversant with it. What we really comprehend is ours to control and employ.

Thus the pair of opposites, Wealth and Poverty, corresponds truly to the meaning of Kaph. If our grasp of the meaning of events be weak, our control of things is uncertain and our want of understanding manifests as poverty. A powerful grasp of the successive situations in our day to day experience brings wealth.

This wealth may be in dollars and cents, or it may take other forms. The money measure has its limitations; but it is safe to say that he who really comprehends the situation of man in this world will never suffer material want.

In Tarot, the total sequence of events up to any given moment is represented by Key 0. And, as we look at the surface of the world, what it amounts to, if we judge by appearances only, is "a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing".

Yet if we observe (Key 1), remember (Key 2), imagine hidden relationships (Key 3), and reason truly (Key 4), we shall comprehend. Our comprehension is symbolized in Tarot by Key 10 and its number is the sum of the numbers from 0 to 4 (0+1+2+3+4=10).
Thus the Wheel of Fortune represents the full development of the meanings of the Emperor, since 10 is the extension of 4.

Scientific comprehension takes facts like the recurrence of the seasons, the regularity of astronomical phenomena, and similar repetitive activities in man's environment, and works out from observation of these facts, from records of their occurrence, and from deductions concerning the relationships existing among them, various systems in which the idea of rotation, cycles, or the recurrence of events in regular, and therefore predictable, order is fundamental. This is what is behind the symbolism of Key 10.

At the outer corners of the picture are the four mystic animals mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel and appearing again in the Apocalypse. The bull stands for Taurus and for the element of earth. The lion stands for Leo and for the element of fire. The eagle is connected with Scorpio and the element of water. The man is associated with Aquarius and the element of air. Thus the animals correspond to the four implements on the Magician's table, which stand or fire (wand), water (cup), air (sword) and earth (coin or pentacle). Occult tradition associates these four elements with the Divine Name, Jehovah, which is written in Hebrew letters around the outer circle of the wheel.

The outer circle contains the Roman characters spelling the word ROTA. From these four letters the artificial word TAROT is formed by beginning at the top of the wheel, and reading the letters clockwise round it beginning and ending with T. Different arrangements of the same letters also form the name ATOR.

Ator was an ancient Latin rendering of the name of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, personifying Nature, and corresponding more or less to Venus, pictured in Tarot as the Empress. This will serve to remind you that all we are able to comprehend consists of activities which belong to the subconscious field of the Life-power's manifestation. "Nature" is just a generalization from our experience of the different fields included in the ancient classification of the four elements. Whatever is at work in these fields is basically the operation of subconscious powers. This, indeed, is why we control whatever we can comprehend.

Within the outer circle showing the four Hebrew and the four Latin letters is an eight-armed cross. Four arms point to the Hebrew, and four to the Latin letters. The arms of the cross pointing to the Latin letters bear four symbols.

These are derived from alchemy. Beneath the letter T is the alchemical symbol for Mercury. Beside the letter A is the alchemical symbol for Sulphur. The symbol beside the letter O stands for Salt. That above the letter R is used by astrologers for the Sign Aquarius, represented in the upper left-hand corner of Key 10 by the head of a man. It is also an alchemical symbol for dissolution and for the essential secret of the Great Work.

Man, by reason of his self-consciousness, is able to apply the "universal solvent", or alchemical Mercury, to the various appearances constituting his environment. By this means he discovers their real, as distinguished from their apparent, nature. Thus man is

able to reduce every form reported by his senses to its primal substance and whenever he does so, he finds that substance to be the limitless Life-power symbolized in Tarot by the Fool.

Then, by exercising his power of mental vision in creative imagination, man is able to fix this primal substance into new shapes and forms. He may do this by the indirect method of invention using machines or other appliances constructed in accordance with his scientific comprehension. Or he may work directly, by mental means only, upon the primal substance and so bring forth forms corresponding to his images. They who are able to do this constitute the inner circle of adepts.

Outside the wheel a serpent descends. It represents the vibrating force associated with the letter Teth and Key 8, involving itself in the conditions of name and form which constitute man's environment.

On the other side ascends a figure having a human body and a jackal's head. This is the Egyptian god Hermanubis, the guide of the soul in its journey through the underworld, and also closely related to the various ideas connected with Mercury and the Magician.

His eye is alongside the letter A which is the Roman equivalent of Aleph. The intellectual consciousness of the more advanced human being **sees**, more or less clearly, what is pictured in Tarot by the Fool (Aleph); but few persons **know** the indwelling Spirit as a direct personal experience.

Yet some have intuitive perception of this Spirit, and thus the ears of Hermanubis are above the letter A in the segment of the wheel containing the letter Yod. Yod is the letter of the Hermit and what is meant by this detail of the symbolism is that though the intellectual consciousness may not experience superconsciousness directly, it may receive intimations concerning that higher order of knowing through the channel of interior hearing.

At the top of the wheel sits a sphinx, like one of those crouching in front of the car in Key 7. Under this creature, which is a synthesis of male and female, human and animal, stands the letter T, corresponding to the final letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Tav , and to Key 21 of Tarot. In the table given in HIGHLIGHTS, you will see that Tav represents the Administrative Intelligence. Thus the sphinx, by its relation to this letter, and to the Mercury symbol under the T, represents completion of the Great Work.

To finish the Great Work is to develop the metaphysical senses which correspond to the physical senses. It is to have direct experience of identity with the **One Self**. We must always remember that this experience is not to be confused with theoretical knowledge **about** this identity, nor with philosophical speculations and religious creeds. The average human being does not even know **about** this identity. He simply believes or disbelieves, without knowing the **Self** directly.

The exceptional human being does know, and because he knows, shares consciously in the administration of the laws of nature. His personal activities are at all times in harmony with the way things really are. He is adjusted to the cosmic rhythm. Thus whatever he does works out as planned and he is free from the ups and downs of fortune.

Use this Tarot Key to remind you that the motion of the heavenly bodies veils a Living Organism. **In** it you live and move and have your being. Your consciousness is not separate from the Intelligence which swings the stars through the cosmos. As an aspect of the One Life, your immediate environment becomes enriched as you grasp the significance of this relationship. Your **basic** thinking and feeling rotates in cycles and manifests in the conditions of your environment. Learn to see the beauty in Life, and life will express back in kind. Learn to become aware of your kinship with all life and you will never know loneliness. Learn to feel the security of Divine Guidance and you will never know poverty. Learn to accept all experience as an enrichment of the soul, and your comprehension of Cosmic Principles will bring the wisdom which passeth understanding. True riches of the soul eliminate the conditions which bring material want.

Tarot will help you to achieve these states of insight in ever greater measure.

KEY 11. JUSTICE

Lamed ל, the Hebrew equivalent of English "L" means "oxgoad". In contrast to Kaph, the hand which grasps, the goad is a tool, or thing grasped. Spelt in the same way, but with a slight change of pronunciation, the name of this letter למד, is a verb, meaning "to teach", and thus the ideas represented by our noun **education** are related to Lamed.

An ox-goad is used to guide oxen and to keep them on the road chosen by the driver. Hence ideas of control and direction are connected with this letter.

Up to this point in our study of Tarot we have come upon a pair, or yoke, of oxen. The first is Aleph, corresponding to the Fool, since the letter-name Aleph means ox or bull. The second is Vav, corresponding to the Hierophant, because Vav is the letter of the sign Taurus, the Bull. Furthermore, the idea of yoking is connected with the meanings of the letter Vav.

Hence the idea of education implied by Lamed has to do with the management of this pair of oxen - the superconsciousness typified by the Fool, and the intuitive knowledge of reality symbolized by the Hierophant. To be educated is not to be possessed of an accumulation of facts gathered from without. It is to be able to apply to the conduct of life the inspiration which comes to us from above (Fool), and from within (Hierophant).

Lamed is the second of three Hebrew letters formed like a serpent. Its shape is like that of a snake, uncoiled, the head at the left side of the letter, the body represented by the horizontal line and the tail indicated by the line dropping from the horizontal line at the right side of the letter. It symbolizes the serpent power, coiled and quiescent in the Hebrew character for Teth ט, now extended and active. Thus Fabre d'Olivet, in THE HEBREW TONGUE RESTORED, page 377, says of the letter Lamed:

"This character as consonant belongs to the lingual sound. As symbolic image it represents the arm of man, the wing of a bird that which extends raises and unfolds itself. As

grammatical sign, it is expansive movement and is applied to all ideas of extension, elevation, occupation, possession. It is, in Hebrew, the directive article, as I have explained in my Grammar, expressing in nouns or actions, a movement of union, dependence, possession or coincidence."

Thus when THE BOOK OF FORMATION assigns action or work to Lamed it agrees with the fundamental meaning of the letter itself. This idea of action adds another thought to our conception of education. He who is truly educated is more than a possessor of information whether gathered from without or from within. He is a person having practical skill. He has drawn forth his powers and has developed ability to apply them to the management and direction of affairs.

To what end? The number 11 gives an answer. It is a pair of 1s. What is shown in Tarot by Key 1, the Magician, is unfolded, augmented, extended by **doubling,** and since the idea of doubling is represented by 2, and by the High Priestess, the Tarot meaning of 11 has to do with the recording and development accomplished by means of the activities represented by the High Priestess, and the result is **balance.**

Observation and memory are the fundamentals of education. Practical skill is the result of training which establishes habits, and these habits are not fully established until our bodies, by the operation of subconsciousness, have been changed.

The body and brain of a pianist, for example, are different from those of one who cannot play. A pianist's hands have a characteristic shape, easily recognized. Whatever skill you may have has left perceptible traces on the structure of your physical mechanism. Thus we have said before that the difference between an adept and an average human being is a difference in physiology. An adept is one who has practical knowledge and makes continual use of everything he knows.

Practical knowledge, moreover, enables one to make adjustments. Hence the name of Key 11 is Justice. Abstract justice is law, and while it is true that human laws are often poor approximations to justice, nevertheless the intent of any code of laws is always toward the establishment of a working arrangement which shall bring the lives of the community governed by that code into harmony with one another and into a position where good shall result from their practical management of human affairs.

Among the zodiacal signs, Libra is attributed to Lamed. It is the only one of the signs which is symbolized by an inanimate object, for its emblem is a pair of scales.

The ruler of Libra is Venus and the sitting figure shown in Key 11 therefore wears a crown and has yellow hair, like the Tarot symbol of Venus, the Empress. She represents creative imagination in its relation to work. All good work must be planned and planning requires the use of the subconscious power to form clear mental images of intended actions.

Such clear images are effective when they agree with the actual facts of the situation. Whatever these clear images are, their details and their framework must be true to fact. This framework is like the bones in a body, and according to astrology, the planet Saturn, exalted in Libra, rules the bones. Hence one prominent feature of Key 11 is a T-cross which ornaments the dress of the woman. In colored versions of Tarot, this ornament is deep indigo, the tint which, in our color scale, represents the planet Saturn.

The difference between creative imagination and mere fancy is that the former has a solid foundation in fact. Arabian story-tellers used fancy to weave their magic carpet. The Wrights dealt with hard facts and developed the airplane.

To make adjustments which will change a problem into an achievement, two things are necessary. We must weigh and measure the facts correctly. Without accurate measurements, without correct standards, we are sure to fail. This is what is at the bottom of most of our troubles. We go by "rule of thumb". We are content with guesses and with approximations. So we blunder along like oxen without drivers, and our hit-and-miss procedure defeats our efforts.

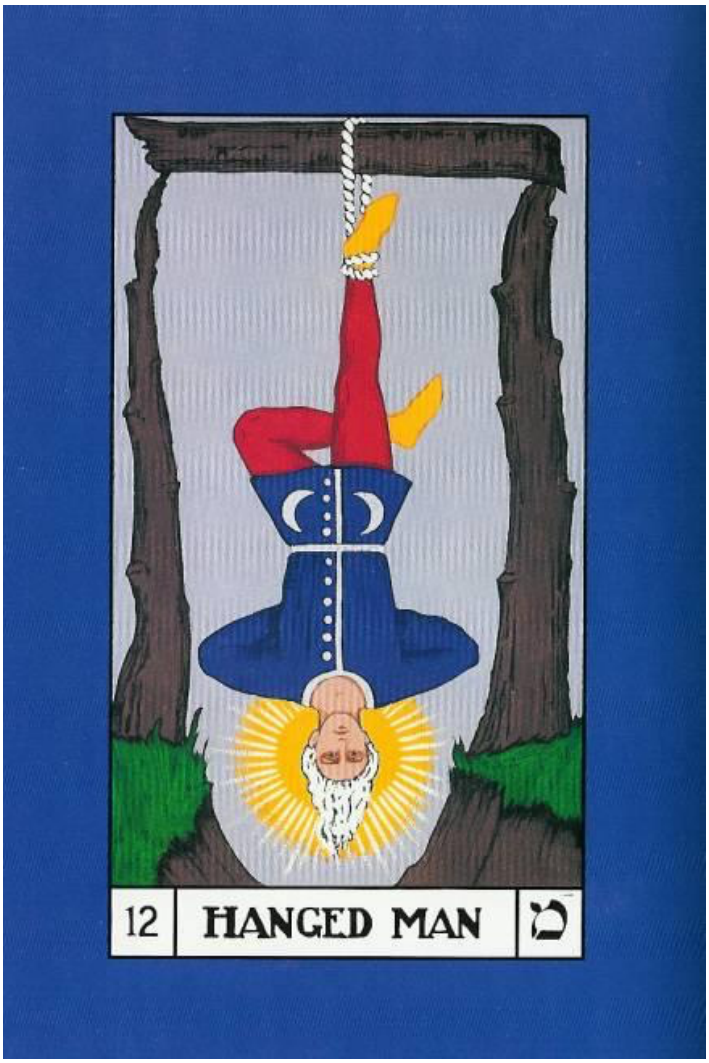
Yet the facts are not all. There must be action in harmony with our knowledge of the actual situation. Moreover, this action must be aimed at eliminating whatever restricts our freedom. Hence the scales of Justice are balanced by her sword, symbol of terror to evil-doers.

Metaphorically, an evil-doer is any activity which restricts freedom and interferes with the harmonious adjustment of our lives. Whatever leads away from the path of liberation, whatever deflects the arrow of purpose from the mark at which it is aimed, must be eliminated. You will notice that this detail of Key 11 is also a feature of Key 10 where the sphinx holds a sword. Remember also that Zain, the sword, is the letter symbolized by the Lovers, a picture of two persons standing side by side like the two 1s in the number 11.

Practical skill in adjusting one's life is an application of the power of discrimination pictured in Key 6; and since 11 is the sum of 5 and 6, we may say also that practical skill is discrimination combined with intuition. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find many instances of sudden flashes of intuitive perception among workers in scientific research. Such persons seek patiently for facts, and their quest for truth requires them to develop great technical skill in the manipulation of delicate instruments requiring fine adjustments.

Key 11 is the complement of Key 10, just as Key 1 is the complement of Key 0. The Wheel of Fortune is the Tarot symbol for cosmic law. Justice is the symbol for the application of that law through human action. Hence the central figure of Key 11 is a seated woman. Her posture is passive and receptive, and she represents the subconscious side of our lives. It may seem to be a paradox to speak of passivity in connection with action, but what is meant is that the basis of successful action is the mental state of agreement with the nature of things as they really are. Thus Key 11 is also connected with the idea of faith.

Faith, "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen", is the basis of right action. True faith is the habitual (therefore subconscious) conviction that nothing whatever in the cosmic order is inimical to man. Whatever is is for our good; and when we have the wit to discover what is behind the appearances surrounding us, and the courage and skill to do what we know, we find that nothing in the universe is against us. Appearances to the contrary are due to our ignorance. When we measure facts correctly, especially the facts about human nature, we shall be able to establish justice in our lives and in our surroundings.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Seven

KEY 12. THE HANGED MAN

The law of Reversal is mentioned frequently in Ageless Wisdom and is represented by innumerable symbols. Key 12 is the most important emblem in Tarot. The application of this Law of Reversal is one of the great secrets of occultism. The essential meaning of the law may be stated as follows:

To reverse the conditions of misery, disease and failure, and substitute for them their opposites of health, happiness and success, it is necessary to think, speak and act in ways which are the reverse of those in which most persons think, speak and act.

One ancient statement of the Law of Reversal is given at the beginning of THE DHAMMAPADA, an important summary of Buddha's doctrine:

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him.

"Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love. This is an old rule."

Yet it is not enough to say, "If you want to be happy and successful, you must learn to reverse your thinking." What we require is a **practical method** which will actually effect the necessary reversal.

Right use of Key 12 is such a method. Just looking at this picture will do wonders in the way of reversing our ordinary habits of thought and speech; but to get the full suggestive power of the picture into operation, it is well to have some knowledge of its meaning and correspondences. When these are understood, they form a bridge which carries the suggestions of the design more easily into our subconsciousness. There they set going trains of mental activity which will make habitual a mental attitude that does actually change our thought, our speech and our action into the reverse of that which is the underlying cause of the misery and bondage we want to overcome.

The letter Mem מ printed on this Key is the equivalent of the English "M". Its name means **seas**, or **water**.

Water is the first mirror, but it reflects everything upside down. It reverses the images cast upon it. This fact led the inventors of Tarot to connect the symbolism of Key 12 with the letter Mem.

The occult water is not the fluid we draw from kitchen taps. It is called water because it is like that element. It is spread over a vast expanse, like a great sea. It moves in waves. It flows in currents and forms itself into whirlpools, or vortices. It also takes form in drops, or corpuscles.

In short, the occult water is the Astral Fluid, the electromagnetic energy which is the substance of all things. It is called the seed of minerals because every mineral is composed of atoms and every atom contains a certain number of corpuscles, or drops, of this primary substance.

This apparently abstract idea has immediate use. Many practical marvels of recent invention have been made possible by the development of the conception of the electrical constitution of matter.

But what difference does this make to an ordinary human being? Only a few of us have any talent for invention. Only a few are equipped to undertake the difficult labor of a research physicist or chemist. Yet we are all interested in getting more out of life. Will this doctrine help us to do so? Will it enable us to make better progress, to enjoy better health, to live freer lives?

Let's see. One thing which makes mental and occult practice difficult is the supposition that what we have to do demands the exertion of an intangible mental power against the inertia of a very tangible physical reality. This "matter" surrounding us is so dense, so resistant, so hard to move, that most persons cannot believe that mere thinking has any power over it.

A practical occultist is not deceived by surface appearances. He knows that physical things have neither the solidity nor the inertia his senses report. He understands that the densest kinds of physical substance, as well as the lightest gases, are forms built up from tiny, widely separated "drops" of the cosmic "water".

Thus, when he begins to attack the practical problem of changing conditions by changing his thinking, he does not face the difficulty which besets a person who believes what his senses report concerning things in his environment. Practical occultists know there is no essential difference between the energy which takes form as thought and that which takes form as a diamond or a piece of metal.

Thus the occult teaching about water enables us to effect a reversal of our mental attitude toward the conditions of our environment. By means of this reversal we free our minds from that subjection to appearances which prevents most persons from using thought-power to change conditions for the better.

The Tarot reading of 12 indicates the outpouring of the powers of subconsciousness (2) through the fixation of self-consciousness in acts of attention (1). This is precisely what the Hanged Man typifies. When concentration is prolonged, the direct experience of the superconscious state of being results. This is perfect union of the personal with the universal consciousness. It is attained by practices which quiet the mind and suspend the formation of chains of ideas.

By paraphrasing the title of Key 12 as "The Suspended Man", it becomes evident that this Key refers to such practice. The inventors of Tarot knew the relationship between the nouns **man** and **mind.** So they chose a title which hints at the idea of the suspension of personal activities. This suspension is achieved by concentration and leads to the release of marvelous powers which give an adept perfect control over his mind, his body, and the conditions of his environment.

He who has this experience reverses his attitude toward life. He feels himself to be a vehicle or instrument for the manifestation or the limitless power of the cosmic Life-Breath. Gone forever is the delusion that personality is, or can be, separate from the sum-total of universal activity.

When Jesus said, "Of myself I can do nothing," he expressed this realization. The words are no confession of weakness. They simply tell the truth that even the least of personal actions is a particular manifestation of universal laws and forces. Instead of lessening the importance of personality, this realization adds to that importance. It shows that the true value of personality is to be found in the fact that a person is an agency whereby the limitless power of the One Life may be brought to bear in controlling the conditions in this field of relative existence.

In the symbolism of Key 12, the gallows is in the form of a Hebrew letter Tav, ת. This letter has been mentioned elsewhere in our lessons as being the letter corresponding to Key 21, The World. This Key symbolizes the real world which is hidden from the ignorant by their delusions.

He who succeeds in reversing his conception of personality realizes that the real world is, so to say, the body of God. He knows himself to be a member of that body. He knows there is nothing anywhere in the real world which is inimical to man, or opposed to man's welfare. He depends utterly on the perfectly adequate support given by that real world to all his personal activities and interests. The logic of the average human being, who bases his reasoning on superficial appearances, is just the opposite to the logic of an adept, who **knows** inner realities.

The average human being is dominated by his imagination and his images are false. What he actually does when he supposes himself to be reasoning is nothing but rationalization. The more he "reasons", the worse becomes his situation for he is a victim of delusion.

An adept, on the contrary, has learned to determine what mental images shall occupy his field of attention. He selects them with care and sees to it that they are true images. This enables him to imagine creatively and thus he arrives at a true vision of man's place in the cosmic order. An adept succeeds in controlling himself and his world because he has a rational grasp of the meaning of his personality.

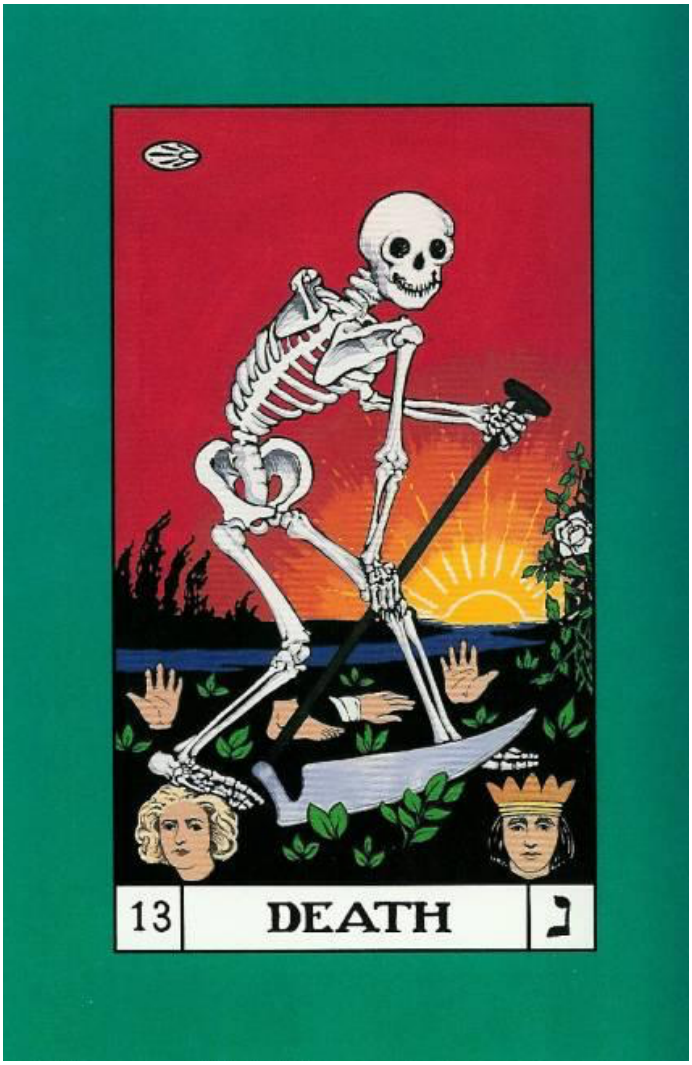
The glory round the Hanged Man's head refers to the illumination which comes as a result of suspending the activity of personal consciousness. This glory is the same as the Sun in Keys 0 and 6.

The Hanged Man's hair is white to show that he is one with the Hermit and the Emperor. But his face is that of a youth. Thus he combines the two aspects which the Life-power presents to us. The Life-power is the Eternal Youth and it is also the Ancient of Days. One of its names is GOD. The other is MAN. He who knows this by direct experience is the wise man who says, "I am doing nothing," even in the midst of the most absorbing activities of terrestrial existence.

By using Key 12 as a focus for concentration, you will discover for yourself far more than we have written here. More than this, you will begin to weave the strands of a consciousness which will eventually establish you in the understanding Key 12 symbolizes.

When the pictorial suggestions of this design begin to take effect, they will initiate a series of changes in your mind and body. As a consequence of these changes, you will adopt the mental attitude of utter dependence on the **One Life. From this mental attitude health and wellbeing follow automatically.** It serves to correct all negative states of mind. Thus it eradicates the causes of failure and fixes one firmly in the realization that the essence of

human personality is identical with the Limitless Life which creates and sustains the whole universe.



KEY 13. DEATH

One main contrast distinguishes Ageless Wisdom from ordinary human philosophies. At best, the speculations of ordinary human reason on the questions of survival and immortality give us no more than hopes based on analogy. At their worst, they lead to the hopeless conviction that this world and its conditions are all we can ever know. Ageless Wisdom offers us a practical method for overcoming death.

This is a method based on human experience. Human beings like ourselves have practiced it successfully in times past. Men and women now living have triumphed over death.

(Scientific psychic research has, in the opinion of most experts, established the case for survival beyond reasonable doubt. The following text, however, does not deal with the survival of consciousness and memory after physical dissolution, but with the actual control by occult methods of such dissolution. *Ed*.)

For such persons the grave has no terrors, death no sting of loss or separation. Theirs is not a hope. It is a certainty, and they say we may share their knowledge.

In order to practice this method, we are not called upon to invite doubts of our sanity by declaring, "There is no death." On the contrary, to find the release we seek we must face resolutely the fact that **bodies** do die. Denial of fact is folly. Ignoring it is no use. Understanding what this hard fact really means is needful and we never can understand anything we try to deny.

Airplanes were not invented by denying the fact that objects heavier than air fall to the ground. Everything in a plane is heavier than air, but we do not deny the force of gravity in order to fly. We admit all the facts, and then we recognize, in certain combinations of other facts, a means to overcome the force of gravity.

We face an undeniable fact when we come into the presence of death. Equally undeniable is the fact that a multitude of unimpeachable witnesses testify to their knowledge that death may be overcome just as we overcome gravity-that is, by calling into operation certain other facts, certain other laws and forces, which are always at hand ready for use.

Part of the life-equipment of every human being is an immortal something which was not born with the body, something which will never die. More than this, **the immortal something within us is what brings about the dissolution of our physical bodies.** Our essential immortal nature is the actual cause of the fact of physical death. When we face the fact of death, and learn its meaning, we shall find out how to overcome it, how to erase it completely from our consciousness and our experience.

This is more than a promise of certainty that we shall survive the death of the body. It is more than a mere hope of resurrection. It is more than a change of consciousness. The knowledge of those who are consciously immortal totally annuls death. Those who become perfect in this knowledge, here on earth, need have no experience of physical dissolution. They are released from what seems to be the "common lot". They are able to maintain the existence of their physical bodies in perfect health and vigor over a period of time limited only by their own deliberate choice.

Key 13 declares this doctrine of Ageless Wisdom symbolically. It does more. It conveys to subconsciousness, through the sense of sight, stimuli which will call forth from our inner mind the knowledge which will enable us to overcome death.

The letter Nun printed on this Key means, as a verb, "to sprout, to grow". As a noun, its meaning is "fish". This is also the proper name Nun given in the Old Testament to the father of Joshua.

Now, when the Old Testament says Joshua (liberation) was the son of Nun (fish), it is hinting that the librating power of truth or reality is a consequence of the power of growth represented by Nun.

In the human body, this power of growth is the cause of the multiplication of cells and of the development of structure. It is also the fundamental principle of reproduction. In Hebrew Wisdom, therefore, the letter Nun is associated with Scorpio, the sign of the zodiac which presides over reproduction.

As the eighth sign of the zodiac, Scorpio has fundamental rulership over the eighth house of the horoscope, the house of death and inheritance. **Our most precious heritage is the power which manifests itself in the fact of death.** For . . . until such time as each individual will have progressed spiritually to that state where he will have learned through direct perception the true nature of his life in its relationship to the One Life, death is a necessity. Otherwise, like a defective phonograph record, the needle of his life would remain forever in the same groove. Endless repetition would replace progress. Most of us

need to be forcibly removed by death from the rut of our false perceptions . . . and again and again so removed until our spiritual knowledge and wisdom assures our progress to perfection.

The true nature of this death power is indicated by the number 13. This is the number in Hebrew, of two words. One means **unity.** The other means **love.** The **One Power** whence all things proceed, the **Love Power** which is the cause of all attractions and affinities, is also the **Death Power** which brings about the dissolution of physical bodies. There are not two antagonistic powers, one making for life, the other for death. There is only **One Power** having opposite forms of manifestation.

At first glance, the central figure of Key 13 is the conventional representation of the "Grim Reaper". To the initiated eye, however, the skeleton is a reminder that the bony structure of the body is the foundation of all our muscular activities without which no action would be possible.

What is shown here, then, is a picture of the basis of all our personal activities. As a symbol, therefore, the skeleton stands for that which is the basis of all function, the foundation of all growth and development.

This something is the **One Power** specialized in the reproductive functions of the body. It is the **Seed-power.** Hence a conventionalized picture of a seed is placed in the upper left-hand comer of the picture.

The same power is represented by the skeleton. All growth and development are based on endless permutations of form. In the absolute sense there is no change for the No-Thing remains eternally Itself throughout the whole series of appearances. Yet, in the relative sense, this pageant of transformation is actual, and it necessitates the dissolution of outworn forms.

Look closely and you will see that the skeleton is curiously distorted. There are two twists in the spinal column. One is just above the pelvis and serves to mark the location of the Mars center in the body. The other is at the neck where the Venus center has its place. Were this skeleton clothed with flesh, its body would be twisted in a way no contortionist could duplicate. This anatomical impossibility indicates the central secret of the thirteenth Key.

We have to learn to give a certain twist to the energy manifested physically through the Mars center. This is the center in the nervous system which controls the reproductive activities of the body. We must learn to turn this energy in another direction, the reverse of what it usually takes.

The Mars force is present in the body during one's entire lifetime. Unless it is deliberately turned in the right direction, we cannot overcome death.

This new direction is given to the Mars force by means of the activity of its complement, the force which is specialized by the Venus center in the throat. Briefly, this is affected by a change in our mental imagery. The knowledge of this fact sheds a little more light on the meaning of Key 13.

The impetus of this rising current of nerve force results in a change of consciousness, accompanied by the manifestation of occult powers which are latent in most human personalities.

Among these is the power of recollecting the experiences of human personality when it is functioning in the astral body and other higher vehicles. All persons "travel" more or less in these higher vehicles when their physical bodies are asleep. We say "more or less", because such "journeys" are by no means of nightly occurrence; and we put the words "travel" and "journeys" in quotation marks because there are good reasons for believing that what seems, during such experiences, to be movement from place to place, is actually simply an extension of consciousness.

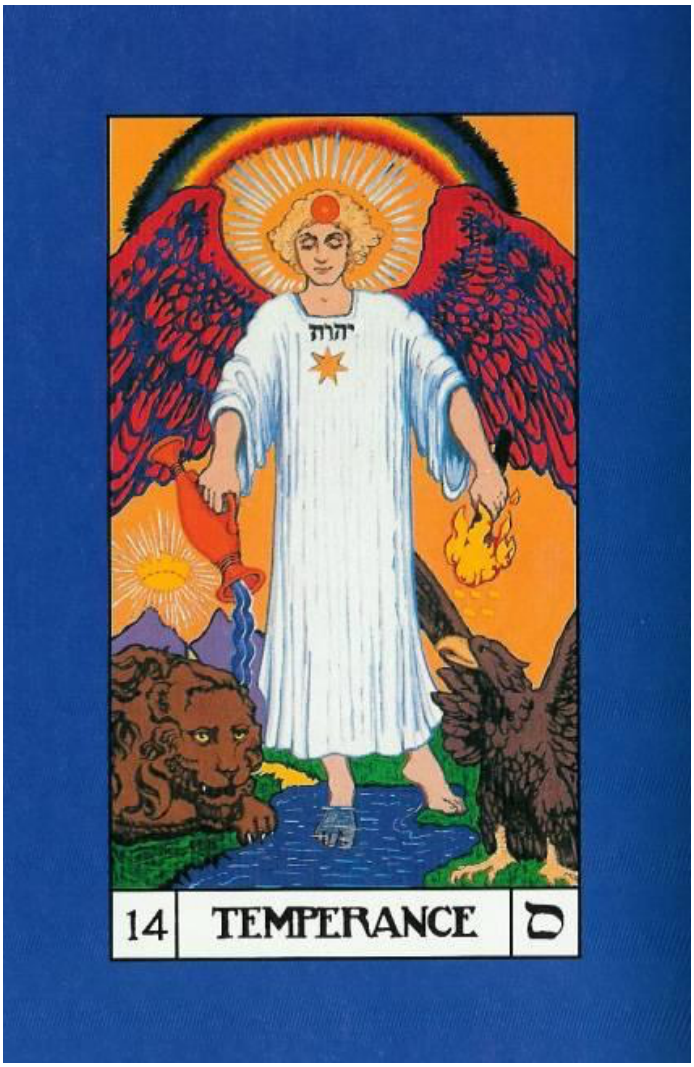
Just as soon as one begins to have conscious waking recollection of such experiences, he is freed from the delusion that his personality depends on having a physical body for its existence as a self-conscious, thinking entity.

The higher powers which unfold after this initial awakening are represented in Key 13 by the hands and feet which the skeleton reaps. His scythe has a handle shaped like a letter "T", to show that this occult work calls into play the power coiled in the Saturn center at the base of the spine.

HIGHLIGHTS tell you that the Imaginative Intelligence is the special quality of consciousness associated with Nun and Key 13. This Key is intended to awaken that particular type of consciousness. It will help you begin to imagine yourself as being free from the bondage of physical and temporal existence. It will aid in setting in motion the subtle inner activities which impel the force from the Mars center to move up instead of down. It will do what is needed in this direction without any weird concentration exercises intended to arouse the activity of body centers.

Study this lesson until you grasp the real import of death. Then picture yourself as being what you really are, free from bondage to the physical body. Eventually you will begin to receive the confirmations we have outlined briefly in this lesson.

Note the word "Introduction" in the heading of this lesson and series of lessons. Future courses and lessons which are directly ahead of you will add much expansion and detail to these introductory teachings.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Eight

KEY 14. TEMPERANCE

Verification is the basic meaning of Key 14. This picture represents the process whereby we prove the accuracy of the principles and laws laid down in Ageless Wisdom. It shows us how we may confirm our beliefs and theories. It indicates the method whereby we may establish the truth of what we are taught.

Truth is established by trial. In order to know, we must do. Fluency in the use of the language of Ageless Wisdom is no guarantee that we are competent to perform the Great Work. We must subject our theories to the laboratory tests of day to day experience.

The Hebrew letter on Key 14 is Samekh ס, and its Chaldean form is the third of the three serpentine letters in the alphabet. It represents a snake with its tail in its mouth, and thus it is a symbol of completion and eternity.

As a verb, the letter-name Samekh means, "to prop, to bear up, to uphold, to sustain, to establish". The original form of the letter was a picture of a tent peg. Thus it really signifies, in relation to a tent, what a foundation means to a house. It gives stability and firmness to our house of life.

The number of Key 14 is significant to every student of Hebrew Wisdom, because 14 is the numerical value of the noun זהב, zawhab, gold. This is the gold of enlightenment, the philosophical gold which represents perfect, verified truth.

The title, Temperance, combines the ideas we have been considering. Understand it in its now obsolete sense, which is "the act of tempering or mingling; modification; combination". Thus "Temperance" really means regulation and the measured proportion of constituent parts.

The Great Work is just this. It combines and harmonizes all the various elements which enter into the constitution of human personality, blending them together in one whole.

In Key 14, the central figure is the great archangel Michael, angel of the sun and angel of the element of fire. The solar disk on his forehead establishes his identity. So does his glowing hair surrounded by rays. He corresponds also to the great angel described in the tenth chapter of Revelation. THE AMERICAN BIBLE translates thus:

"Then I saw another mighty angel descend from heaven. He was clothed in a cloud, and a rainbow encircled his head. His face was like the sun, his legs were like pillars of fire, and he had a little scroll open in his hand. He set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and he uttered a great shout like the roar of a lion; and when he shouted, the seven thunders raised their voices."

Notice the connection between the solar angel and the seven thunders which uttered things the seer was forbidden to write. The thunderbolt is the special emblem of Jupiter, and Jupiter rules the sign Sagittarius to which Key 14 corresponds. Sagittarius is the Archer and the Hebrew name for this sign is also the name for the rainbow.

The only difference between the angel in Revelation and this one is that the angel in Key 14 has a vase and a torch instead of a little scroll. Yet the meaning is really the same. The little scroll is the scroll of the law, which the High Priestess holds. When that scroll is unrolled, the Law is made manifest, or put into operation. In Key 14, the operation of the Law is shown by what the angel does.

The Divine Name יהוה, Jehovah, on his breast identifies the angel with the **One Reality.** Commonly we think of angels **as** being different from the One Life of which they are messengers; but in truth, they are aspects of that One Life. **That which was, is, and is to come,** יהוה, is the Reality which presents itself to us under all guises.

The seven-pointed star under the Great Name refers to the Seven Spirits of God. These are seven phases of the One Conscious Energy.

The vase, from which water is poured, represents the Astral Fluid. Like the water in the vases shown in Key 17, it comes from the pool below the angel in which his right foot rests. The water has the same meaning as elsewhere throughout the Keys of Tarot. It falls in a triple stream to show that, although this cosmic substance is usually associated with subconsciousness, its activities really include conscious and superconscious operations also, which are all combined in the Great Work.

The stream of water falls on a lion, symbol of the sign Leo. His color, however, should be darker than the lion in Key 10 because he not only represents the sign Leo and the element of fire, but also the "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour", which is one of the Biblical

symbols of the devil. This suggests to subconsciousness that the Angel is tempering the undeveloped aspects of personality in order to transmute ignorance.

The stream of water falling on the lion also indicates the modification of the animal nature by the powers of human consciousness. Again, it suggests the blending of opposite elements, water and fire.

The torch in the angel's left hand represents the consumption of physical forms by the fiery action of the Life-power. From it fall five flames, each shaped like a letter Yod. They refer to the fivefold differentiation of the Life-Breath into ether, fire, water, air and earth.

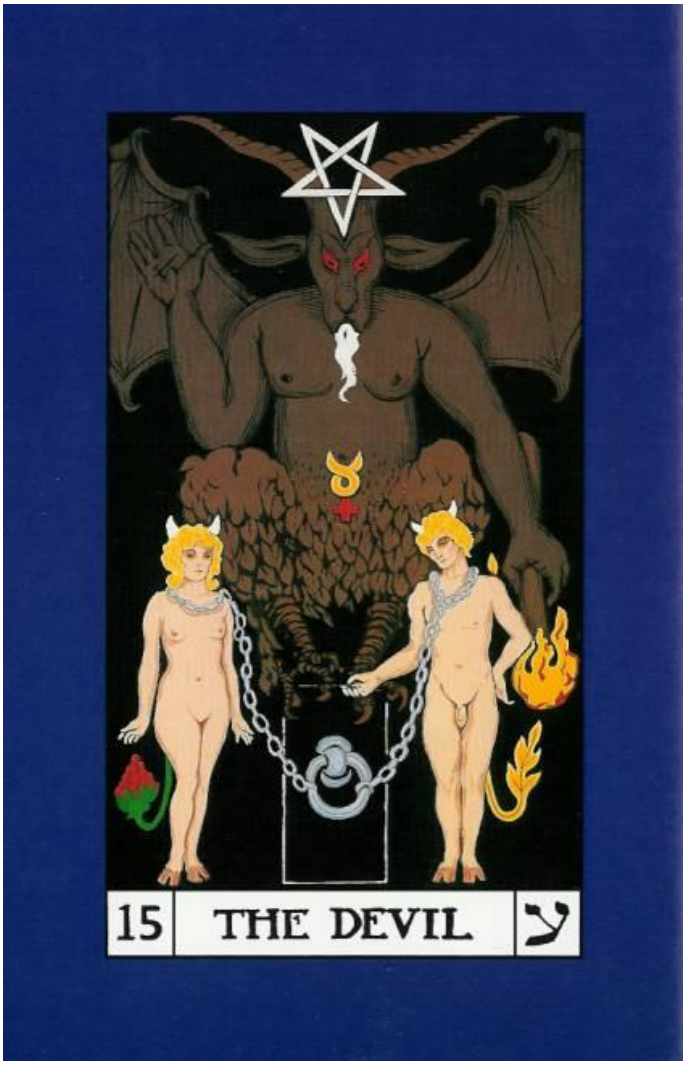
Since Scorpio is a watery sign, the flames falling on an eagle indicate the blending of opposites and the equilibrium which results. The eagle is a symbol for water as well as for Scorpio. It is, moreover, the bird of Jupiter, ruling planet of Sagittarius.

In the background, at the end of the path, is a crown suspended in air. It represents the first of the ten Qabalistic Sephiroth, Kether, and the Crown. It is a symbol of the culmination of the Great Work which is the perfect self-knowledge indicated by the statement, "I and the Father are in perfect union." The twin mountain-peaks on either side of the crown stand for two other Sephiroth, Wisdom and Understanding.

The pool and the earth represent, respectively, consciousness and physical form. The angel stands on both to show that the Great Work is a psycho-chemical operation wherein transformations of mental states bring about corresponding changes in the bodily organism.

The central idea of this Key is that we may verify for ourselves the teaching of Ageless wisdom that man is destined to complete the cosmic manifestation of the Life-power through his personal activities. In so doing, man changes his body so that his brain can register consciousness of identity with the Primal Will of which all activities are expressions.

This Key sums up the occult doctrine as to what occurs in such transformation. By using it as a focus for concentrated attention, we are enabled to keep steadily in mind what is the real meaning of daily experience. Then we will come to know that occult doctrine is true. Practice of the mental states evoked by Key 14 is the "practice of the presence of God", or the "knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel".



KEY 15. THE DEVIL

The principle of contrast, running through Tarot, is obvious in comparing Keys 14 and 15. The angel of Temperance is an angel of light. Key 15 shows an angel of darkness.

Of all the Keys of Tarot, Key 15 is one of the most important. It is a symbolic veil for the greatest practical secret of occultism. It both conceals and reveals the secret of the powers ascribed by tradition to Moses, David and Solomon. This is the same secret Pythagoras learned in Egyptian temple schools. It is the Great Arcanum of alchemy and magic. To know it is to be able to make the Philosophers' Stone and the Elixir of Life.

Yet those who know it **cannot** tell. For the essential point is beyond the power of words to express. If you already know it, you will be able to decide whether or not the writer of this lesson knows it also. If you are ready to learn it, this lesson will plant a seed in your mind which seed will grow eventually into positive knowledge.

This knowledge is interiorly received and perceived. The meaning dawns on us. When this occurs, there is no doubt, no guesswork no uncertainty. One knows, and knows that he knows.

The first clue is that the letter-name, ע , עין, Ayin, means not only "eye" and "fountain", but also "outward appearance". Thus we know Key 15 is a picture of the way things look rather than a picture of the way they really are. Yet we must bear in mind also the fact that every Key of Tarot is a picture of humanity itself, a symbol for some aspect of the **One Self** which is manifest in the innumerable personalities constituting the human race. Becoming aware of the undeveloped aspects of personality is the first step towards overcoming our "devilish" responses to life experience.

The very word "devil" is from a Greek noun which means "slanderer". This may help you to understand what Key 15 really means. It stands for everything or anything that gives man a bad opinion of the worth and value of his nature.

What does just this? What else but the appearances constituting human environment when superficially interpreted. Yet, if we know what they are, what they spring from, and what is their purpose in the cosmic order, we shall understand how to deal with them.

The Bible gives another hint to the same effect when it tells us the serpent who tempted Eve was created on a day when the Lord looked at all He had made and pronounced it "very good." If we think long and deeply on the problem of creation, we shall see that the Lord had no material other than His own substance. Then it may dawn upon us that it is the **appearances** which deceive us and are the immediate causes of our fears, and of our poor opinion of human nature.

In brief, then, Key 15 represents the One Power as it **appears** to those who are content to take its appearances at face value. When we look at the world surrounding us, we see a composite of seemingly incongruous elements mixed in hopeless confusion. Of this confusion the impossible mixture of male and female, human and animal, bird and beast, which is the central figure of Key 15, is a perfect example. Nothing like it actually exists, yet everything in it is some aspect of reality.

Even the sign of the zodiac, which is attributed to the letter Ayin, has connection with the Devil. For the ancient Egyptians called this sign Typhon, and their Typhon was the origin of much that came to be incorporated into later notions of His Satanic Majesty. Symbolic representations of Capricorn include: 1. A monster having the head and body of a goat and the tail of a fish; 2. A crocodile with the head of an elephant; 3. a donkey; 4. the mysterious creature represented in Job and in Revelation as Leviathan and the Old Serpent.

As a feminine sign, Capricorn is related to the mother-power, which, after the growth brought about through temptation and trial, brings forth the Savior, the Redeemed One.

This establishes a link with another occult meaning of Ayin given in a table in HIGHLIGHTS which says this letter represents the Renewing Intelligence. A Qabalistic commentary on this declares that by means of the Renewing Intelligence God renews all that is begun afresh in the creation of the world. Here the Wisdom of Israel gives us a hint that there is a relationship, even an identity, between the power which tempts and destroys and that which renews and saves.

The perception of this identity by occultists has made necessary the careful veiling of esoteric doctrines, even when these doctrines are communicable. In this supposedly enlightened age, and in this supposedly free country, there are many localities where it would be dangerous to make a plain statement of some things written in this lesson.

Perhaps what has been written by Eliphas Levi will come as near as anything can to putting you on the track of the true meaning of this Tarot Key. He says, "Satan, as a superior personality and power, has no existence. The devil is the Great Magic Agent employed for evil purposes by a perverse will." To this we may add that the perversity of that will is due to ignorance.

In the Tarot Key, the Devil is androgyne, having one male and one female breast. From the pentagram to the extremity of his right-hand horn, there are ten divisions, and on the other horn there are twelve. These represent the twenty-two forces corresponding to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet and to the Tarot Keys.

The inverted pentagram is a symbol of evil magic. It represents the inversion of the powers of normal humanity. When man misunderstands himself, and in his thinking inverts his true position, the outcome of his error is the hideous image of the Adversary.

The Devil has the ears of an ass because the donkey is one of the symbols of Capricorn. His face is that of a goat, though it has also a human look. This part of the symbolism refers to the sexual manifestation of the Life-power, now termed libido by analytical psychology.

The Devil's gross, hairy body suggests the element of earth. In the colored versions of this Key it is painted a brown, earthen tint. Its massive proportions suggest the ponderous powers of the physical plane.

His wings are bat's wings- wings of darkness inasmuch as bats fly at night. They symbolize the occult agencies whereby the forces of the physical plane, and the powers of instinctive energy, are transported from place to place, or transmuted from one form to another.

The eagle's wings and talons refer to the sign Scorpio and therefore to the ideas which are represented by the letter Nun. To a symbolist, the eagle's talons suggest the element of water and this reminds us that one of the astrological emblems for Capricorn is half goat, half fish.

The symbol of Mercury on the Devil's belly refers to the control exerted by self-consciousness over the force symbolized by the demon. The upper part of the Mercury symbol is yellow and the cross is red. Thus the whole symbol represents a combination of powers belonging to Mercury with those of Mars, the planet exalted in Capricorn. This suggests to subconsciousness that by becoming **aware** of the limitations of superficial appearance we can transform our actions and mental emotional states, thus bringing Light into the dark areas of our lives.

On the uplifted right hand of the Devil is the astrological symbol for Saturn. This hand makes a gesture which is as much as to say, "There is nothing hidden. What you see is all there is." This is the primary falsehood that enslaves ignorant believers in superficial appearances and leads to all sorts of disastrous results.

The inverted torch in the Devil's left hand is similar to the torch in the angel's hand in Key 14. It bums smokily and gives little light. It is a symbol for the inverted use of the Mars force.

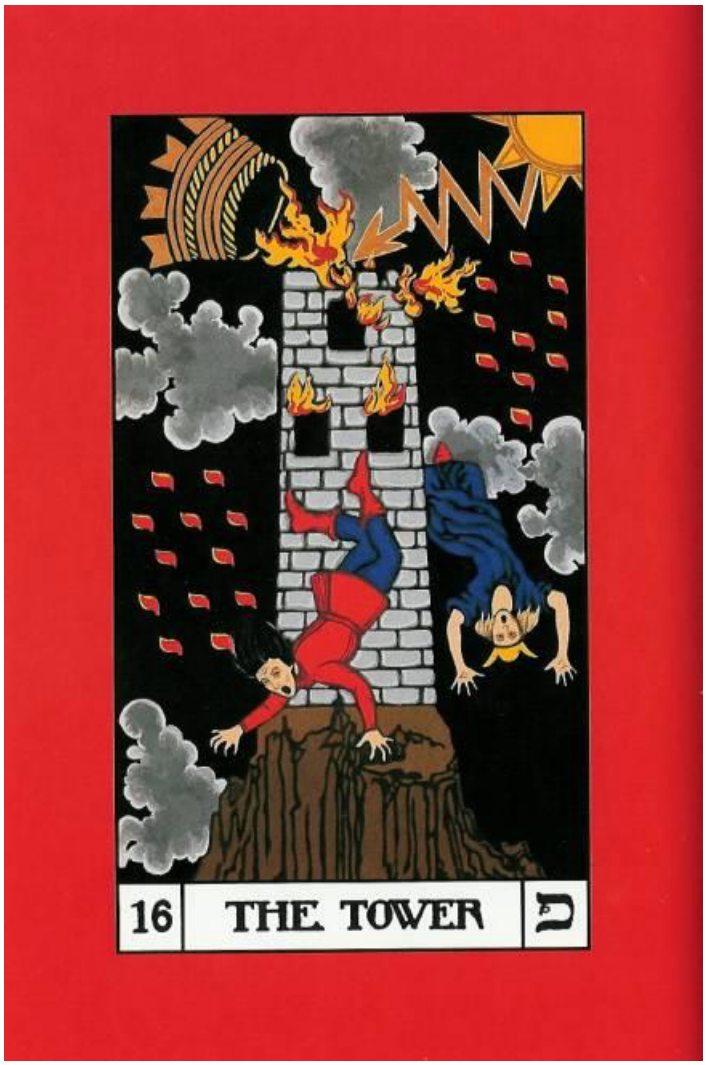
The figures chained to a half-cube, symbol of half-knowledge of the physical plane, are human but bestialized. They represent what happens to human consciousness when it is dominated by false knowledge.

At the beginning of this section we said that the Great Secret cannot be told. Thus what we write in concluding this lesson must be developed by each of our readers as he progresses in understanding.

There is no devil if one means an evil, malicious, independent principle of personality **opposed** to God and man. **There is a devil** if by this term you understand the universal power of materialization, which seems to enclose the Limitless Light within the boundaries of three-dimensional existence. This is the power, which **apparently** subdivides the **One life** into many separate lives.

Yet this same power is what redeems, renews, enlightens, and finally liberates us. When we understand what it really is, and know what we ourselves really are, the Adversary is overcome. The name of the Adversary is **Legion,** or **Multiplicity.** The consciousness which overcomes it is the realization of **Unity.**

How may this realization be developed? By the exercise of the power called Mercury. By attention, by observation, by forming correct interpretations and right plans. Then the very power which held us in chains becomes the force which sets us free and the opponent who frames the problems that now are puzzling us becomes the Master of the Game . . . the one who helps us find the solutions and play with skill.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Nine

KEY 16. THE TOWER

The last seven Keys of Tarot, beginning with Key 15, illustrate seven steps in the spiritual unfoldment of man. The first stage is that of fear, ignorance and misery. It is the state of mind and affairs experienced by the greater number of human beings.

Ageless Wisdom understands this stage to be necessary. Unhappy as are those persons who have not advanced beyond it, they are by no means victims of blind laws which do not take human life into account. Nor are they forgotten children of an absentee Deity, too careless to provide for their welfare. Least of all are they suffering from malignant hindrances devised by a personal Devil. Their state is the necessary consequence of the nature of the creative process. For creation is by evolution progressive development. To mean anything, it must mean going from less development to more, from relative limitation and restriction to an ever greater measure of freedom. This process of man's progressive liberation is divided by Ageless Wisdom into seven stages, corresponding to the last seven Keys of Tarot.

The second stage is represented by Key 16. Its design is based on the esoteric meaning of the letter Peh פ, the Hebrew equivalent of "P".

Compare Key 16 with Key 10. You will see that the character for Peh is the same as the letter Kaph כ, with something added which looks like a tongue in an open mouth. This is just what Peh stands for--the open mouth of man as the organ of speech.

The mouth, which enables us to **express** our thoughts in speech, is in contrast to the eye (Ayin, Key 15) which is the organ that enables us to **receive** impressions from the various appearances constituting our environment. Furthermore, Peh, being a Kaph with a tongue,

stands for the articulate expression of the scientific comprehension which is symbolized by the Wheel of Fortune.

The number 16, again, leads to the same general conclusion. For it is not only 6 (the Lovers, typifying discrimination) expressed by means of self-consciousness (1, the Magician), but also the reduction of 16 is 7, the number of the Tarot Key which corresponds to the letter to which Qabalists attribute the function of speech.

HIGHLIGHTS say the letter Peh corresponds to Mars, the planet ruling the brain (Aries) and the reproductive process (Scorpio). Mars, moreover, is exalted in Capricorn, corresponding to Key 15.

"Mars" is the astrological name of the force which gives tonicity to our muscles. It is the force which is sent from the brain, like an electric charge, along the paths of the motor nerves. These tiny electric shocks sent out from the brain set off the activity of the muscles somewhat as a spark from a battery sets off the explosion of a charge of powder.

Thus the Magician, representing Mercury and self-consciousness, wears a red robe, the color of which indicates the Mars force. The conscious mind uses the brain-battery to set off the explosions of muscular activity.

We are able to control ourselves and our circumstances because we can translate mental perception into words. Basically, we think in pictures. Hence Key 4, the Emperor, is associated with the sense of sight. Until we can say what we see, however, and until what we say is in agreement with things as they really are, instead of being merely the expression of opinions based on superficial acceptance of appearances, we cannot plan our actions intelligently nor secure the cooperation of other persons.

All control of thought is word-control, because every definite ideal can be put into words. (Here it must be remembered that the various terminologies of arts and sciences, including those of higher mathematics, are actually forms of language just as certainly as ordinary forms of speech.) Thus, when we say that health, happiness and success come through right thinking, we mean that these desirable conditions are made manifest by right use of language. Conversely, the conditions of sickness, misery and failure follow wrong use of words. Our house of life is built of words and we must be wise in the selection and arrangement of our materials.

Key 16, therefore, is full of symbols which relate to language. As soon as they are pointed out, they become obvious.

Count the courses of masonry in the tower. There are exactly twenty-two. Then count the Yods which hang in the air on either side of the building. Again, there are Twenty-two. Every letter of the Hebrew alphabet is developed from the letter Yod. Hence the twenty-two Yods are symbols of the powers represented by the Hebrew letters and by the Tarot Keys.

These Yods hang in the air because one principle of Ageless Wisdom is this: **the forces of life which enter into thought are also the forces which take form in all physical things. These forces have themselves no physical basis. On the contrary, they are self-supporting and the foundation of everything else.**

Consequently, ten of the Yods are on one side of the tower where they form a pattern, like the Qabalistic Tree of Life, which is a diagram of the ten basic aspects of the Life-power intelligible to man. They represent also the three elements, fire, air and water (of which the fourth element, earth, is merely a synthesis) combined with the seven active principles corresponding to the astrological planets.

On the other side of the tower are twelve Yods. They correspond to the, letters of the alphabet which represent the twelve signs of the zodiac and the twelve basic types of human personality. These letters, moreover, are so grouped that they make the outline of a figure 8 with a dot in the center of each loop. Remember that the value of the letter Cheth, to which is attributed the function of speech, is also 8. We cannot develop the meaning here. We simply bring it to your attention in order to show you how carefully every detail of the esoteric Tarot was designed.

The twenty-two courses of masonry in the tower symbolize wrong use of words, It is as if the builders of the tower, seeking to make themselves secure from attack, had, instead, imprisoned themselves.

The tower is built of bricks as was the Tower of Babel to which it alludes. The Bible says of those who built the Tower of Babel that they had bricks instead of stone. This indicates a substitution of clay for stone, and clay in the Bible is the same as the "dust of the ground" from which Adam was formed.

This indicates that the tower is a structure representing human speech when that speech is the product of unenlightened self-consciousness. In the Bible allegory, as in Tarot, Adam represents that in us which gives names to things. The substitution of brick for stone is a reference to the fact that almost everywhere in the Bible "stone" symbolizes conscious union with Reality.

Again, in Hebrew, the word for "brick" is spelt exactly the same as the Hebrew noun for "moon". The root-meaning is "whiteness" and refers to the fact that both Egyptian and Babylonian bricks were made of white clay. Thus to substitute brick for stone is to substitute what may well be called "moonshine" for true consciousness of our identity with the Parent Source of all existence.

This moonshine is more poisonous than any product of bootleg stills. It is the false knowledge resulting from the race-mind's memory record of man's imperfect appraisal of himself and his circumstances.

Another name for it is common sense-that is, what most people think and say. It is always in opposition to science. It is always an enemy of progress. It is the "rule of thumb" consciousness of those who take appearances at face value. It is expressed in popular proverbs, in superstitions, and in much of what passes for theology.

No two persons who believe in common sense ever agrees as to what it is. "Common sense ought to tell you," we hear. What does it mean? What else but this: "If only you were the superior person I am you would agree with me." To build your house of life with the bricks of common sense is to be afflicted with the curse of Babel. Common sense is only a confusion of tongues. There can be no unity of opinion among persons whose interpretations of experience are based on looking **at** things, instead of **into** them.

The fundamental error of common sense is the notion that every human being is a separate entity possessed of powers of his own. This is a philosophy of isolation. Hence the tower in Key 16 stands on a lonely peak.

The lightning-flash of Key 16 comes from a solar disk to indicate that the Life-power is a source of illumination. This flash of true perception knocks off the usurper's crown of fancied, spurious superiority.

The crown represents also the false notion that there is any such will. The only free will is the Primal Will. The power of that Will flows through us but does not originate in personality. We have the **use** of this free Will, just as we have the use of the radiant energy which is its physical expression.

The lightning-flash starts a fire which will ultimately destroy the tower. In the second stage of unfoldment comes a sudden fish of perception which upsets all our opinions and seems to destroy the very foundations of our personal existence. We shall see later that this apparent catastrophe is followed by another stage of unfoldment in which there is nothing of the terror depicted here.

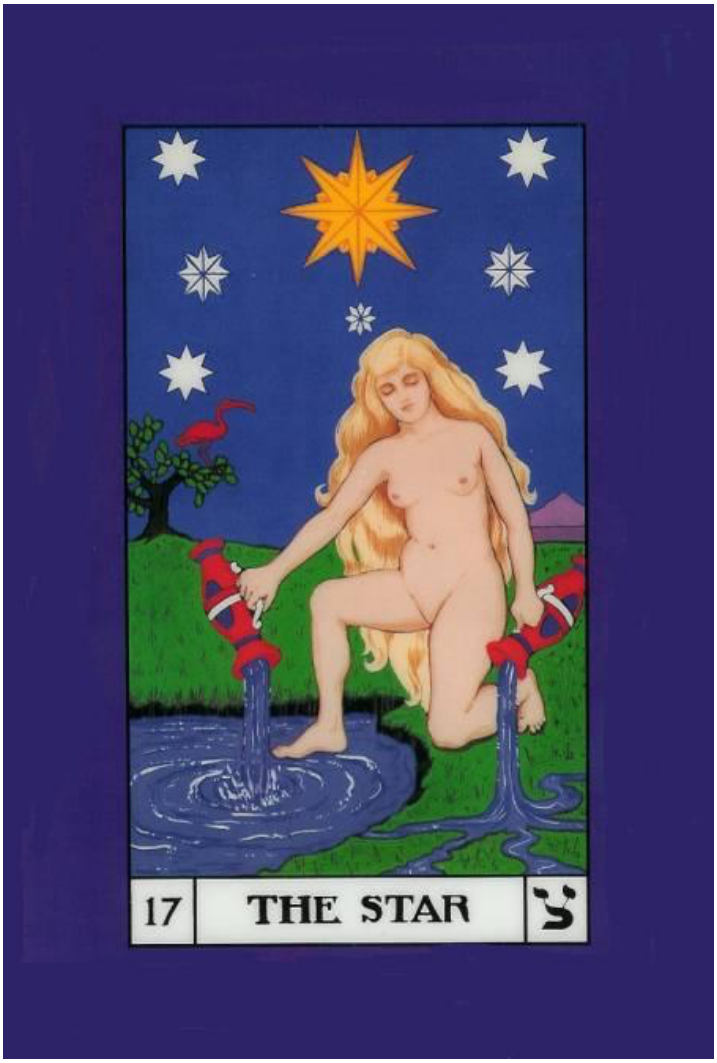
Notice that the falling figures are fully clothed in contrast to the nude figures of Key 6. For one of the results of the sudden illumination pictured here is that both aspects of personal consciousness undergo a reversal of opinion. Self-consciousness and subconsciousness always disguise themselves from each other until awakening comes. They are always more or less at cross purposes.

Use this Key as a means to overcome your superstitions. Use it to free your mind from being enslaved by common sense.

Use it also whenever you are confronted by what seems to be a problem. You have a problem because you are ignorant. You are ignorant because, hitherto, you have accepted

some appearance at face value. You are in trouble because your words express faulty observation and poor reasoning.

That Key 16 will help you overcome this misuse of language, you need not **believe.** Just **try** it. You will be delighted at the way your subconsciousness responds.



KEY 17. THE STAR

The third stage of spiritual unfoldment is the stage of **revelation,** symbolized by Key 17. With this Key, also, we come to the Tarot doctrine of meditation.

Now, if it be true that none of us does anything of or by himself, it must be true that when we meditate something is done **through** us rather than **by** us. THE BOOK OF TOKENS says the balance between the universal success-process and the fundamental nature of things is preserved by the Life-power's ceaseless meditation on its own nature. When a human being really meditates, he participates in this continual meditation of the Life-power.

At the time we received the text of the BOOK OF TOKENS, we received from the same Source the following instruction:

"One of the profoundest doctrines of Sacred Science is the doctrine that the Universe owes its existence to the Creator's perpetual self-recognition. Nature is thus the result of Spirit's meditation upon the powers of its own being. The universe is **thought** into existence and is maintained in existence by thought. Upon this foundation rests the whole structure of practical occultism and from this doctrine you may understand the importance of meditation.

"Whenever aspirants really meditate they are sharing in the exercise of the divine power that creates everything. Thus one of the tests whereby a student may know whether or not he has really succeeded in meditation is this: Let him find out whether or not what he has been doing takes form in the production of something better than he had before he began to meditate.

"To the Self-contemplation of Spirit, the universe appears as it really is. The correct application of Tarot shows us Reality-not surface appearances. The Divine Mother is always unveiled before her Lord. To man, except in those rare moments when he participates in the

Divine meditation, She is at best the veiled Isis, and at worst the demon of the fifteenth Key."

Among the Hebrew letters, meditation is represented by Tzaddi , the fish-hook. This is the letter of the zodiacal sign Aquarius, the Water-bearer. Consequently the symbols of Key 17 include an obvious reference to this sign.

The Hebrew name for Aquarius is associated by number with the circulation of blood. Blood is truly the "water-bearer" in the human body. The occult meaning here has to do with the fact that the organic state in which meditation becomes possible is really a chemical state of the blood. The blood is the true "Astral Fluid" of the occultists because all the elements entering into its composition are specialized forms of the radiant energy which comes to us from the stars. This cosmic radiant energy is sent out from the various suns, or fixed stars, throughout the universe.

In Key 17, these innumerable sources of energy are pictured as a single great star over the woman's head. This star is also a symbol of that which alchemists call the Quintessence, the fifth, or last and highest power in any natural body.

The star has eight principal rays which is a geometrical correspondence to the eight spokes of the Wheel of Fortune. It corresponds also to the ten symbols of Spirit on the dress of the Fool.

The seven lesser stars correspond to what alchemists termed "their metals". These are the same as the seven chakras of the yogis. They are also the "interior stars" of esoteric astrology. They are eight-pointed to indicate their correspondence to the great star.

The two stars on either side of the great star, distinguished from the others by their interior rays, are symbols of the Sun and Moon. The whole arrangement is as follows:

MARS VENUS

SUN MOON

MERCURY

SATURN JUPITER

The tree represents the human organism and particularly the brain and nervous system. The bird on the tree is an ibis, a fishing bird, whose beak has the same meaning as the letter

Tzaddi. Because the Egyptians associated the ibis with Hermes, this bird corresponds to what Tarot represents elsewhere as the Magician.

The woman is the same as the Empress and as the woman in Key 8. Note that the reduction of 17 is 8. This same woman will appear again as the World-dancer in the last Key of Tarot.

The old astrologers said Aquarius was ruled by Saturn and this attribution was current when Tarot was invented. Thus we know that the principal figure of Key 17 is the same Saturn pictured in Key 21 as a dancer. Yet this same figure is also the Empress, or Venus. There is an occult sympathy between Saturn and Venus which is indicated again and again throughout the texts of Ageless Wisdom.

The woman also represents truth and in meditation truth about nature is shown to us without disguise. Hence the woman is nude.

The weight of her body rests on her left knee and is supported by earth representing the facts of physical existence. She maintains her balance with her right leg and her right foot rests on the surface of the pool. This indicates that in meditation something occurs, which gives solidity and supporting power to the ordinarily unstable mind-stuff symbolized by water. Alchemists refer to meditation when they speak of "fixation of the volatile".

The two vases stand for the two personal modes of consciousness, self-consciousness and subconsciousness. The ellipses on their sides symbolize the zero-sign which stands for Spirit, the No-Thing.

From the vase in the woman's right hand falls a stream which sets up a wave-motion in the pool. This represents the activity of subconsciousness brought about by meditation. From the other vase, a stream falls on land and divides into five parts to represent the perfection of the five senses resulting from the practice of meditation.

The mountain is the same as that shown in Key 6 and 8. It represents the perfection of the Great Work which is control of the inorganic forms of the Life-power's activity. In alchemy this is called the "mineral work". It is the final achievement of occult practice.

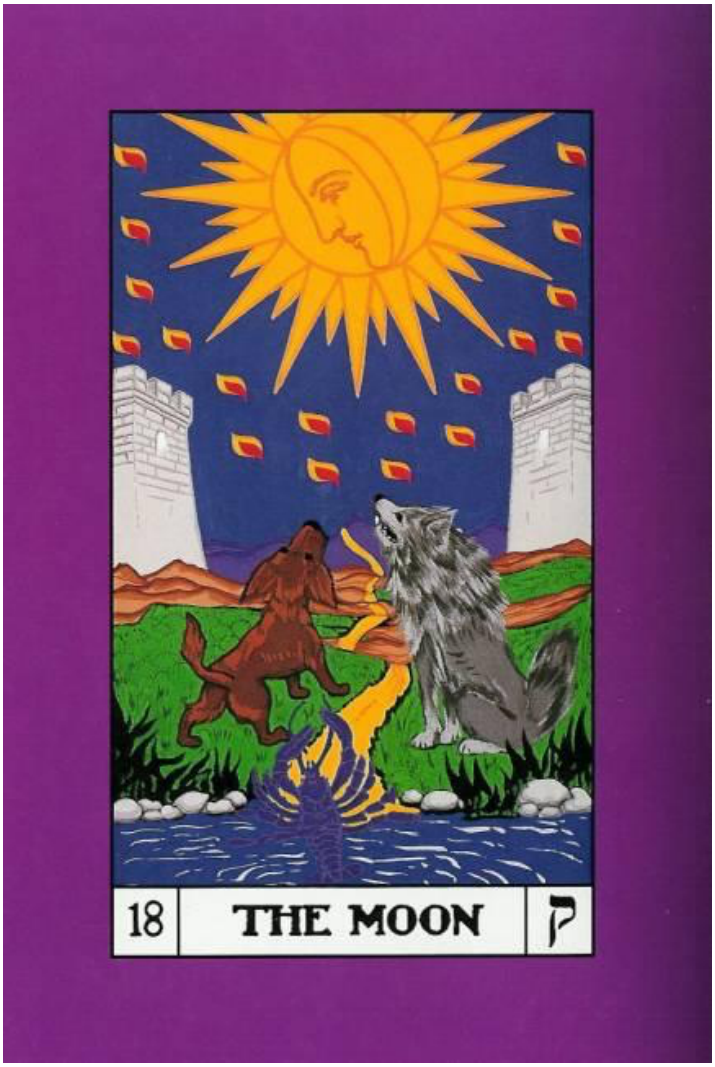
The contrast between the scene of terror in Key 16 and this peaceful picture needs no emphasis. Yet one should remember that nature unveils herself to us in meditation **after the storm and stress of awakening.**

Unless we have been shocked into wakefulness by some crisis in our lives, we never enter into this third stage of unfoldment. So long as we remain isolated in the fancied security of our tower of personal isolation, we are still in the dark.

Use this Key in connection with Key 5. By so doing you will be able to draw from within the right answer to every problem. Always remember that you must not only have a problem,

but must also admit to yourself that its presence is invariably an indication of your ignorance. Bait the hook of meditation with intense desire for light on your problem of the present moment. Be specific. Don't sit in the silence with your mind open to anything that may come.

A fisherman varies his bait according to what fish he wants to catch. If you use Key 17 as a means to help you meditate, you will find that it aids you to get light on the problem of today and that tomorrow it will do the same.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Ten

KEY 18. THE MOON

The most ancient form of the letter Qoph was a picture of a large knot tied in a cord. Later, this letter was represented by a symbol, which stood for the back of the human head, and this has been conventionalized in the character ק.

The letter-name also means "back of the head". Its occult attributions show that the Sages of Israel shared with wise men from the Far East the knowledge that some of the most important organs of the human body are located at the rear of the brain. This part of the head contains the posterior lobes of the cerebrum where the sight center is placed. It also houses the cerebellum.

Just below the posterior lobe of the cerebellum is a knot of nerve tissue called the medulla oblongata. It unites the brain to the spinal cord and its branches. Thus it is the connecting link between the higher centers of sensation, thought and action in the head, and the subordinate centers in the trunk. The medulla itself is indeed a knot, presenting many problems to anatomists and physiologists.

Faulty as ordinary methods of studying the nervous system may be, because tissues examined under the microscope are taken from dead bodies, it has been found that the medulla governs respiration, regulates the movements of the heart, and is the principal center controlling the circulation of the blood. Besides these, it has other functions of basic importance in maintaining bodily health and activity from day to day. This knot of nerve cells in the back of the head is what keeps us alive and its functions are carried on without interruption while we sleep.

Sleep, therefore, is assigned to Qoph in one of the tables in HIGHLIGHTS because, primarily, what consciousness remains active during sleep is expressed through this center

at the back of the head. Yet there are further reasons for attributing sleep to Qoph. Those who are able to use finer senses than do most persons can study the functions of living organisms. Thus they have learned that the back of the head contains groups of cells which may be directly influenced by practices described by modern psychology when it explains suggestion . . . i.e., they are amenable to suggestion.

Treatments depending on affirmations are based on the law of suggestion no matter what may be the theories held by persons who give such treatments. The fact that every metaphysical healer gets about the same percentage of healings as any other indicates this clearly.

The principle is always the same. By means of words, or other devices, the healer helps the patient to form consciously a specific image of the desired result. He makes his patient **expect** this result. Then the desirable image is impressed on subconsciousness.

This image is transferred from the upper brain, through the Moon center behind the root of the nose, to the Venus center in the throat. From the Venus center it radiates through the entire sympathetic nervous system. At the same time it is transferred also to the cells of the medulla and from them to the cerebra-spinal nervous system.

Thus the Moon center (pituitary body) and the medulla may be considered as being two related centers. The former is connected with the sympathetic nervous system, the latter with the cerebra-spinal system. Remember that they are both relay stations between brain and body. Impulses pass through them downward from the brain and upward from cell groups in the trunk and limbs. Because of this close connection between the functions of the Moon center, symbolized in Tarot by the High Priestess, and those of the medulla, represented by Key 18, the latter is named "The Moon".

Corporeal Intelligence, or Body Consciousness, is attributed to Qoph in HIGHLIGHTS. After what you have just read concerning the medulla, this attribution will be easy to understand. The Hebrew word translated "corporeal" is from a root which means "to rain upon", and the symbols of Key 18 include a reference to this.

The main thing to remember is that Key 18 has to do with the physical body and its activities. This is important because much pretended occultism assumes that the Great Work aims to separate the "higher principles" from the physical body. Beginners are often led astray by these false doctrines. Those who do not know are forever talking about the "weight of the flesh", or the "thralldom of matter". They create the impression that the body is an enemy, that there is something evil in flesh and blood, that the one thing to be desired is to suppress the physical organism and subdue its normal functions.

The truth is the exact opposite. While we live on the physical plane, our task is to refine our physical bodies, to purify them, to effect subtle changes in their structure. The aim of a true occultist is to begin where nature leaves off and to go on to perfect the work of evolution

which nature cannot complete without man's co-operation. The Great Work aims to build a perfect physical vehicle which shall be truly a "temple not made with the hands, eternal in the heavens".

Do not be misled by that last word. We live in the heavens now. Is not this earth one of the innumerable heavenly bodies flying through space under the guidance of the Universal Mind? Are we not living our lives by transformations of energy from a star, receiving this energy from it, and, by means of this energy, communicating our own influence to the rest of creation? The lie that heaven is distant-whether in time or space-must be made to vanish like mist in the light of the truth that the heavens are here, in this very time and place.

The sign of the zodiac attributed to Qoph is Pisces. Pisces governs the feet and a path worn by human feet is a conspicuous symbol in Key 18.

In medical astrology, Pisces has a reflex influence on the part of the body which is governed by Virgo. This also is suggested by Tarot because the number 18, reduced, is 9, the number of the Hermit. Again, the height whereon the Hermit stands is the upper end of the path which begins in Key 18.

Occultists often use puns to fix their doctrine in the minds of their pupils. Hence the feet are said to represent understanding. This is why the sign Pisces is associated with the Way of Liberation and with Body Consciousness. Until we understand the principle involved, we are unable to apply it. The principle is this:

All manifestation is light vibration. On the physical plane, the expression of the higher powers requires the presence of suitable physical instruments. These instruments must be built within the human body by an extension of the process which has brought the body to its present stage of development.

Number 18 expresses the power of 8, manifested through the agency of 1. Key 8 is a symbol of control of the animal nature having special reference to the functions of a center (the sun center) near the heart. Key 1 symbolizes the direction of subconscious powers by means of acts of attention. Key 8 represents the power of the sun. Key 1 stands for Mercury. Key 18 is named "The Moon". By number and title, therefore, this Tarot illustration of the occult meanings of Qoph corresponds to the alchemical dictum, "The Great Work is nothing but the operation of the Sun and Moon performed by the aid of Mercury."

The alchemical process is a physical process directed and controlled by mental means. It aims at a transformation of the human body. When this transformation is effected, the adept has a physical vehicle by means of which he is able to exercise unusual powers, among them being the ability to transmute metals. His own body is his laboratory and its organs are the "secret vessels" employed in the work of an alchemist.

In Key 18 the moon has sixteen principal and sixteen secondary rays, thirty-two in all. These refer to the Thirty-two Paths of Wisdom, the thirty-two modes of human conscious energy represented by the Qabalistic diagram of the Tree of Life. These are, so to say, woven together to make the human personality and its bodily vesture. Subconscious powers, typified by the moon, are the active agencies in this operation.

From the moon fall eighteen Hebrew Yods. In the colored version these letters are red and yellow to represent the life force which is fixed in the chemical composition of the blood. In exoteric versions of Tarot, they are often pictured as drops of blood, and this "rain" of blood is the connection with the Hebrew root mentioned in the third paragraph of page 2 of this lesson. In symbolic language these falling Yods say, "The power of Yod is what descends into physical embodiment. It is the power of the Will of the Ancient of Days."

On either side of the path are battlemented towers, forming a gateway. The design is intended to suggest that each tower is connected with a wall. According to the occult tradition we have received, this is the wall which marks the limits of physical sensation and perception. Yet it is not a final boundary. Beyond it lies a vast region of experience and the way leading into that region is open for all who have courage to follow it.

The dog and the wolf are animals of the same genus, both canines. The wolf is a result of natural evolution. The dog is a product of human adaptation. Thus the dog represents art in the widest sense of that term, while the wolf represents natural conditions which may be modified by adaptation.

The path lies between these extremes of art and nature. In the foreground it traverses a cultivated area bounded in the middle distance by the towers. This is the field of experience available to all because it is within the limits of ordinary sensation.

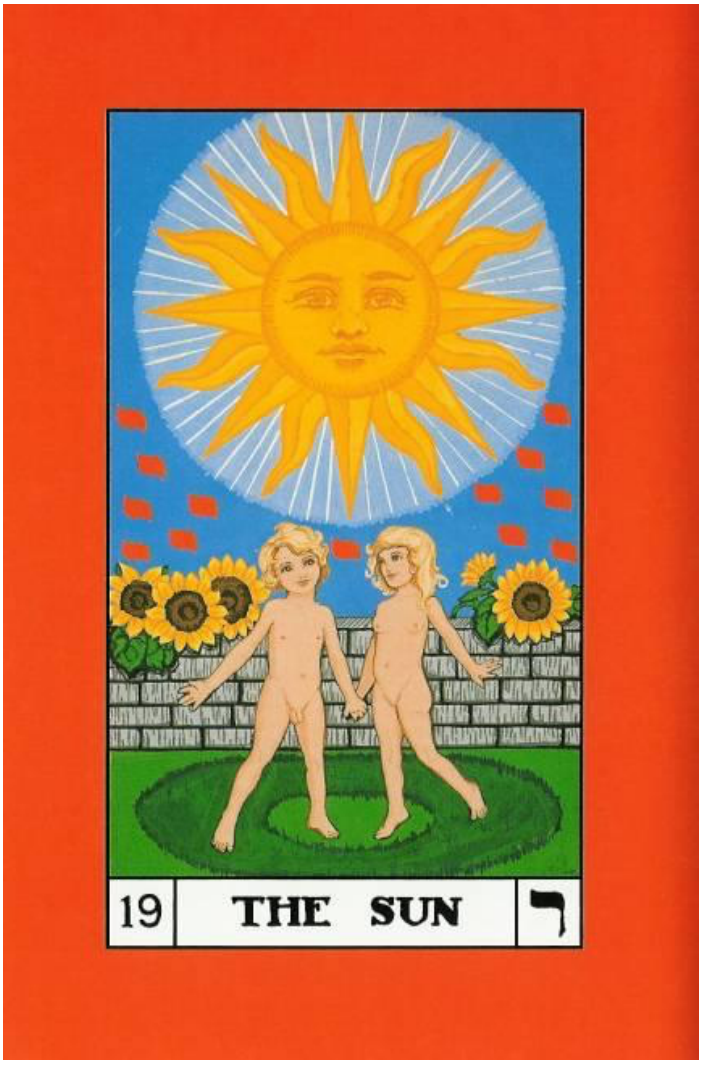
The path leads beyond this into blue distances representing the planes of consciousness we may enter when we have changed our bodies, chemically and structurally. This region of the Beyond may be entered also during sleep and trance; but knowledge so gained is imperfect because it has to be brought into the field of conscious awareness through a physical vehicle not yet adapted to the requirements of the higher orders of knowing.

The rise and fall of the path refers to the law of periodicity. This, as we have seen, is an idea related to the various symbols of polarity represented by the High Priestess. Yet, though there are ups and downs along relatively short distances on this path, the road itself is a continual ascent.

It begins in a pool which represents the universal subconscious plane of life activity. This is the same pool we have seen in Keys 14 and 17. From it rises a crayfish, an animal wearing its skeleton outside and using that bony carapace as a shield against attack. It symbolizes the early stages of unfoldment in which the student thinks of himself as being separate from the rest of nature.

The alchemical dictum, "First the stone, then the plant, then the animal, then the man, and finally the god," is suggested by the stones and plants at the edge of the pool, by the crayfish, dog and wolf, and by the path and the towers-the former marking the progress of man, and the latter, structures built by him. The path leads through the opening guarded by the towers. It is through structures effected by human artifice that the Way of liberation leads man to the Beyond and up to the height where the Hermit, symbol of the divine stage of unfoldment, stands lighting the way for those who climb toward him from lower levels.

The practical use of Key 18 is to evoke from your subconsciousness its deep knowledge of the truth that spiritual unfoldment here on earth necessitates physiological transformations. Practice with this Key sets in motion activities whereby subconsciousness applies its natural control of the body to effecting minute alterations in blood chemistry and in the structure of cell groups. Ultimately, this makes the body a suitable instrument for performing the Great Work.



KEY 19. THE SUN

The contrast between Qoph, the back of the head, and Resh ר, the face or countenance, needs no comment because it is obvious. The letter-name Resh, signifying "head, face, or countenance", carries with it the same ideas of supremacy we associate with the English noun "head".

The word "countenance" is from a Latin verb meaning "to hold together, to contain". Similarly, the Hebrew for "face" means also "the sum-total". There is a sense in which a human personality is summed up by its face, and whatever be the defects in our knowledge of physiognomy, our faces do tell a story to competent readers. Hence the table in HIGHLIGHTS has the ancient Qabalistic attribution to Resh, the "Collective Intelligence". This is the consciousness which sums up all other modes of mental activity.

The head of anything is its directive principle. The head of an enterprise is the one who knows the ends or objectives toward which the enterprise is directed. He is also the person responsible for the initiation of various activities leading toward these ends.

In numbers, the end of a cycle is represented by 9, and the beginning by 1. Hence 19, indicating the working of 9 through 1, is a numeral symbol of the effect which a destined end (9) produces, through acts of selection and initiative (1). In Tarot, 19 is the Hermit manifesting through the Magician.

In our lives, what the Hermit stands for is a goal. We work toward it. All practical occultism aims at reaching the height whereon the Hermit stands. Yet the truth is that the powers we utilize to reach this goal are themselves derived from that One Source. We apply them through mental activities symbolized by the Magician. The result of this application brings about the state pictured by Key 19. Note that both the Magician and the Hermit are related to Mercury.

The title of Key 19 is "The Sun". This is also the name of the heavenly body corresponding to the letter Resh. The activity of the sun is a direct manifestation of the power of the Originating Principle of the universe. The radiant energy of our day-star is a particular expression of the universal radiance. It provides substance for the formation of all terrestrial bodies, and it is also the power-source for all movements of matter on the surface of this globe.

Behind it is the invisible Spiritual Sun. The **power** of our sun is identical with that of the Spiritual Sun, but our day-star is only a physical presentation of something greater which shines through all suns and stars and **is** eternally, whether it be manifested in physical form or not.

The sun in this picture has, as always in alchemical symbolism, a human face. It is the "Face in the Sky", and this detail confirms the correctness of the attribution of Key 19 to the letter Resh.

The day-star is pictured with eight salient, or pointed, and eight wavy rays. Each ray is divided by a line so that the total number suggested is 2 x 16, or 32. This is the number of the Paths of Wisdom or aspects of conscious energy. These have been spoken of also in connection with the lunar rays mentioned on page 3 of this lesson.

The sun, then, symbolizes the conscious energy, which is the source and mover of all terrestrial activities. It is not a blind, purely mechanical or chemical force. It is a living energy akin to ourselves. Physically and mentally we are sprung from it and belong to the same genus, though we are members of another species. What physical science knows about the sun is limited to its physical appearance and manifestations. Ageless Wisdom reveals something more. The sun is a focus of living consciousness, a **being** rather than a thing. One might as well try to sum up George Washington by cataloguing his physical characteristics as to say that the sun is nothing more than so much matter in a state of flaming incandescence.

From the sun fall thirteen Yods. In the colored Tarot they are orange, the tint connected with solar force in our color scale. The same tint is used in India to represent Prana, the fundamental energy of the universe.

The number 13 refers particularly to two Hebrew words having this number which signify Unity and Love. This indicates the occult doctrine that the force which unites and combines all things in this world is derived from the sun and is the attractive power which finds emotional expression in love.

Since these are Yods, and Yod is the number 10, the thirteen letters stand also for the number 130. This is the value of several Hebrew words whose English meanings are:

1. Ayin, the Eye, name of the letter Tarot symbolizes by Key 15;

2. A noun signifying "deliverance";

3. The name of the Angel of Redemption;

4. The Pillars (Jachin and Boaz);

5. A ladder or staircase.

Thus, to the inventors of Tarot, the thirteen Yods represented the power which seems like an adversary because we misunderstand it. In truth this power sets us free, renews our lives, and delivers us from evil. Thus it is truly the Angel of Redemption. Its dual activities are represented by the pillars, Jachin and Boaz, which Solomon set up before the door of his temple. These are pictured in Tarot as the pillars of the High Priestess. This power works on various planes which are represented in occult fraternities by the degrees or grades through which the initiate advances, as if climbing a staircase. In the Bible this system of progressive unfoldment is represented by Jacob's ladder, and in Qabalah by the diagram of the Tree of Life.

The sunflowers represent the manifestation of the solar force in the organic world below man. Four flowers are open and the fifth is about to bloom. They represent four steps in the upward evolution of the physical embodiment of sun-power. These are the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, animal life, and human life at the level of the average man. The sunflower about to open is a symbol for the completion of the Great Work in the fifth kingdom, composed of regenerated humanity; the Adepts and Masters.

The wall represents the erroneous conception of "matter" built up by human imagination from sense experience. What we sense is **real,** hence the wall is built of stone, not of brick. Yet we mistake the meaning of our sensations. The five courses of the wall correspond to the five main physical senses. If we rely wholly on them, they are a barrier to further progress.

The children, a boy and a girl just at the beginning of adolescence, represent the unfolding of regenerated human consciousness in the two aspects constituting human personality; self-consciousness (boy) and subconsciousness (girl). In regeneration, the human aspect of subconsciousness is renewed and the Great Work does more than merely to bring the animal nature under control. The reconciliation of the Man and the Woman in us is pictured here. When we become "as little children", the man-child of self-consciousness and the woman-child of subconsciousness are both regenerated.

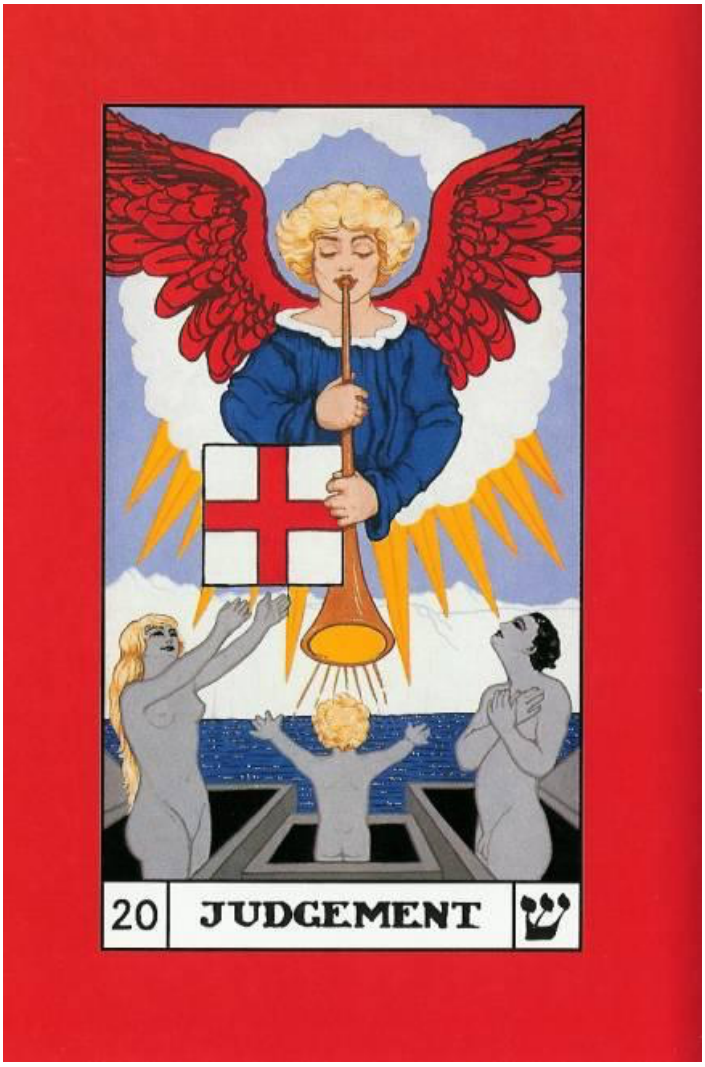
The children dance in a fairy ring consisting of two concentric circles which themselves form a solar symbol. It represents the limitations of physical existence.

So long as we remain on the physical plane, we do not transcend those limitations. We do not need to. Health, happiness and success are not to be sought in some other world. We may experience them here. Wisdom, Truth and Beauty do not abide in some other sphere. Unless we learn to discover them on the physical plane, we shall not find them at all.

The power we employ is not, of course, limited to physical existence. What we are trying to make clear now is that the old, lying doctrines which lead man to neglect the world he lives in while he engages in vain endeavors to enter an imaginary heaven, are contradicted by this symbolism. The Great Secret (which remains a secret even when we declare it openly) is that physical existence is a spiritual fact. Spiritual consciousness is the Stone of the Wise.

Spiritual consciousness is an awakening to the **meaning** of what material consciousness supposes to be "nothing but" physical existence. It is a recognition of the spiritual substance of this world.

Ignorance calls this substance "matter". Wisdom perceives it more clearly and wisdom is the result of a new birth. It is the discovery that even now we are truly Children of the Sun. When this knowledge comes, it wells up in our hearts as a song of joy and we turn from the limitations of the senses to the freedom of spiritual knowing.



INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

Lesson Eleven

KEY 20. JUDGEMENT

Shin (ש, pronounced sheen) is the third of the three "Mother" letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The first Mother is Aleph corresponding to the Fool. The second is Mem, the letter of Key 12, the Hanged Man. Aleph and the Fool are related to the element of air. Mem and the Hanged Man are connected with the element of water. Shin and Judgement correspond to the element of fire.

This is the fire of Spirit. Knowing this, Hebrew wise men called Shin the Holy Letter. For the numeral value of Shin is 300, and 300 is the total of the values of the letters in Ruach Elohim, "the Life-Breath of the Gods".

Fire and Spirit are also associated in the occult meanings of the letter Aleph. For Aleph is a symbol for Ruach, the Life-Breath, and to it, as the table in HIGHLIGHTS says, the Fiery Intelligence is attributed. Thus there is to be expected an underlying correspondence between Key 0 and Key 20.

This is shown in many ways, among them being the fact that the number 20 represents the operation of the power of 0 through the agency of 2. Only one other Tarot Key shows 0 as the immediate cause of what is pictured by the Key. This is, of course, Key 10, where the working of 0 through 1 is indicated.

In Key 10, self-consciousness grasps the import of the basic wheel-pattern of cosmic manifestation. In Key 20, what is diagrammed as a wheel in Key 10 becomes part of human experience. The active power at work is the fire of Spirit. The agency is subconsciousness which takes the idea represented by Key 10 and works out transformations of personality resulting in the realization symbolized by Key 20.

The table in HIGHLIGHTS gives Perpetual Intelligence as the designation for this type of realization. It is conscious awareness that human life is not temporal, but eternal.

Participation in this consciousness was the object of the ancient Mysteries. The founders of those Mysteries understood that this type of knowing is the result of specific training whereby the natural man is transformed into a higher species of being.

In all accounts of the Mysteries there is always reference to fire in connection with the experience of the Eternal Consciousness. Nor is this merely symbolical. An imperfect experience of this kind led Dr. Bucke to write his book, COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS. Describing his own brief glimpse of this higher knowing, he speaks of a rosy light so definitely perceived that he thought there must be a fire in the vicinity.

The visions of Ezekiel and of St. John identify the Divine Presence with fire. The Chaldean Oracles describe various stages of the Great Work completed by a vision of a cloud of fire, whirling, and folding itself upon itself. When this is perceived, say the Oracles, "Hear thou the Voice of the fire."

Shin means "tooth" or "fang". The immediate suggestion of the noun "fang" is that it is the tooth of a serpent whereby deadly poison is injected into the veins of the snake's victim. Again and again in occultism, the power by means of which liberation is attained, and the supernal consciousness realized, is compared to a venomous serpent.

Why is this? **Simply because the old man must "die" before the new man may be "born".** Nobody can exercise the higher occult powers and remain an ordinary human being.

The First Matter on which we perform the alchemical operation of sublimation is our **own consciousness.** We must lose our lives in order to find them.

The other, more general meaning of Shin refers to the tooth of any animal. Thus it is a sign of that which breaks down forms and begins the process of assimilation.

Here, too, is a hint of something deeper. He who enters into the Perpetual Intelligence, Eternal Consciousness, or Conscious Immortality, finds that he has not so much **attained** that consciousness as that his lesser consciousness has been **assimilated** by the higher order of knowing.

The real Actor in this divine event is not the man. It is the **One Spirit** which is like a devouring fire consuming the sense of separate identity, and releasing us from the bonds of time and space.

The title, Judgement, implies completion, decision, termination. In none of the older Tarot Keys is this symbol named "The Last Judgement". We have here no narrow reference to exoteric Christian doctrines.

The inventors of Tarot understood what is veiled by these doctrines. They knew that this picture, like that of the Hierophant (called the Pope in older Tarot designs), would divert the attention of ecclesiastical orthodoxy from the true purport of the Keys. The title of Key 20 really refers to the completion of the Great Work.

This is the final state of **personal** consciousness. What is represented by the last Key of Tarot, the World, is beyond any personal condition; but in the situation pictured by Key 20, there is still to be seen the consciousness of "I and others", which disappears in the perfect unity symbolized by Key 21.

In the composition of the figure of the angel is concealed a geometrical statement of the Fourth Dimension. The whole figure is so drawn that the surrounding cloud defines a circle, containing two smaller circles, one over the other, to make a figure 8. Hence this geometrical basis of the design represents Eternity (the circle) and dominion (the figure 8). In Ouspensky's TERTIUM ORGANUM, this same geometrical design is employed to represent the Fourth Dimension.

Obviously, the angel is Gabriel. He is the angel of the element of water. The angel is the presiding genius of that meta-physical substance which, throughout Tarot, is symbolized by water, and he is also the active principle behind the apparently passive figure of the High Priestess.

His trumpet represents the specialization of the Life-Breath in sound. Seven great sounds, each one corresponding to one of the interior stars, or alchemical metals, are represented by seven rays descending from the trumpet. Readers familiar with Theosophical terminology will recognize here a reference to the seven great rays which are active in the evolutionary process we have called the Great Work.

The mountains in the background are snow-covered like the height toward which the Fool gazes and the peak whereon the Hermit stands. They represent abstract thought which finds its purest expression in the science of mathematics.

The sea is the final reservoir of those many waters which begin, in Tarot, with the robe of the High Priestess. This is also the Great Sea of the Qabalists, which they call "Mother", and which is connected with Understanding. It is when the Life-power's own perfect understanding of itself finds expression in and through a human personality that what is pictured by Key 20 comes to pass.

Thee coffins float on the sea. They are of stone to represent the physical plane. They are rectangular to show three dimensions.

The three human figures stand up-right in the coffins. The line of their bodies is thus at right angles to the bottom of the coffins. The purpose of this detail is to indicate the mathematical definition of the Fourth Dimension-the dimension which is at right angles to the other three.

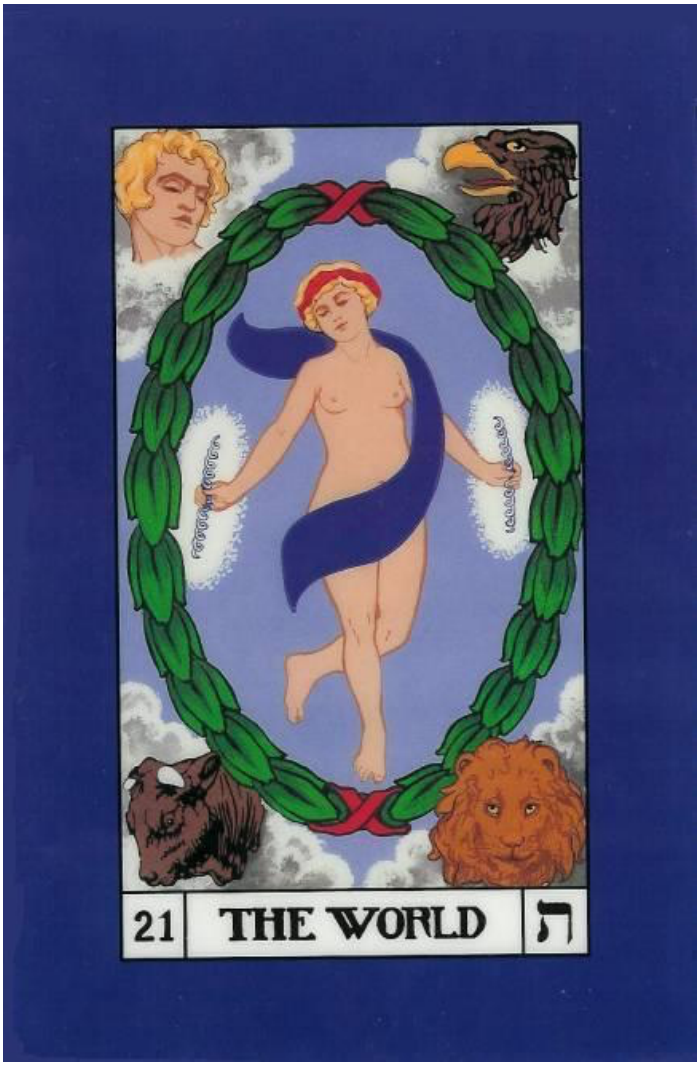
The woman is the active figure of the three. She it is who receives the influence of the magical vibrations coming from the trumpet. Her uplifted hands represent the sublimation of subconscious activities.

The man stands with hands folded on his breast. He looks up in silent adoration but does nothing because activity has been transferred from self-consciousness to subconsciousness.

The child's uplifted arms give the traditional sign of Typhon, or Apophis, the Destroyer. This is because he represents the rebirth, which comes as a result of mastering the destructive principle, personified in Egyptian mythology as Typhon. His mother is Isis, and his father is Osiris, in that same Egyptian myth.

Thus the three figures represent an ancient mystery formula which ends with the names of Isis, Apophis and Osiris. The initials of the three names are I A O, or Yaho, one of the most potent "words of power". It is still in use and has direct connection with controlled employment of sound vibration in ways, which make immediate use of the fact of the Fourth dimension; Even though many initiates who are trained in the use of this mystical word are not themselves directly aware of the Fourth Dimension;

Key 20, then, sets the pattern for your own personal realization of immortality. It calls forth subconscious activities which result, at last, in this final liberation. It will help you realize that even now you are **living** in the Fourth Dimension, in that Eternity of which time, as measured by man, is only a partial expression. It will aid you to understand also that just as you live in Eternity, so do you share the quality of omnipresence which is part of your true make-up because the foundation of your personal life is the free Spirit bound by neither time nor place.



KEY 21. THE WORLD

The name of the letter Tav ת means "signature" or "mark". In ancient Hebrew, it was often written as we write the **plus (+)** sign in arithmetic.

As representing a signature, Tav implies security, pledge, guarantee, and the like. The signature makes a contract valid. The "Sign of Tav" is the final seal and witness of the Great Work.

The direction attributed by Qabalists to Tav is Center, sometimes called "the palace of holiness in the midst". The idea is that the ruling principle dwells at the center.

Administrative Intelligence is therefore attributed to Tav because the Lord's consciousness-the mental state of the originating and directive principle of the universe-is what administers every detail of cosmic activity. When a human being completes the Great Work, his contemporaries suppose he has acquired unusual control over his environment. He himself knows better.

He has identified himself with the central, directive Principle of the universe. Because this has occurred, his every thought, his every word, his every act is an immediate, undistorted expression of the Conscious Energy which administers the laws of nature. He has not gained power. He simply gives free expression to the One Power, which is actually the central reality in every human life.

He participates in the cosmic government. He enters the kingdom of heaven as a fully enfranchised citizen who takes active part in the execution of the laws. Nature obeys him because he expresses **That** which is both Author and Lord of nature.

HIGHLIGHTS attribute the planet Saturn to Tav. Your personal "Saturn" is the interior star corresponding to a center at the base of the spine where the serpent-power is coiled.

In mythology, Saturn is father of the gods and eats his children. The meaning is that the mode of consciousness typified by Saturn and by the letter Tav is one which swallows up all other modes of consciousness.

To give any adequate verbal expression to this is impossible. We do what we can, when we say that in the all-embracing Divine Consciousness there can be no trace of the feeling of "otherness".

Every human being who has tried to express his own experience of this consciousness has told us that in it everything disappears but the sense of identity or oneness. Such statements are unintelligible to ordinary men and women, yet the fact that all seers agree in using this kind of language indicates clearly that they have had a common experience. Little as we may be able to imagine such an experience, reason tells us that an order of knowing which is all-inclusive must necessarily be free from the qualification, "I am I, and the universe is another."

Key 21 is the expression of the power of 1 through the agency of 2. 21 expresses the manifestation of self-consciousness through the activity of subconsciousness.

Yet, in this instance, the self-consciousness is not personal. It is the self-awareness of the One Identity, and the subconsciousness through which it works is the all-inclusive subconscious level of the Life-power's being.

This is not easy to explain. Perhaps you may grasp the idea if we say the final outcome of the Great Work is really a recollection of powers most persons have forgotten they possess.

Among these powers is an extension of consciousness beyond the limits of the body into the forms which constitute one's environment. In this consciousness, the whole universe is perceived as being the **One Body** of the **One Self.** To realize this is to be aware that the directive **Center** of the whole field of cosmic activity dwells in the heart of man.

The title, "The World," is a translation from the Hebrew olahm, meaning "eternity, universe, world". The oldest significance of this word is, "that which is hidden or veiled".

The title of Key 21 indicates also what may be termed "world-consciousness". He who learns to express the Administrative Intelligence is in tune with the whole universe.

The four animals are the same as those of Key 10. Associated with the fixed signs of the zodiac, they represent the fixed conditions in which all manifestation takes place. They are also symbols for the four elements and for four great planes of manifestation. The idea suggested by their positions in the corners of the Key is that every event is included within the **All.**

The wreath is an ellipse eight units high and five units wide. This presents a formula for the approximate squaring of the circle, and the sum of the numbers 5 and 8 gives the 13 which denotes Unity and Love.

The wreath is really a zero-sign. It indicates that the World and the No-Thing are not two things, but **One.** The World is the way the No-Thing presents itself to our minds.

The dancing figure is the Woman who has appeared throughout the Tarot series. She is so drawn that her head and hands are at the angles of a triangle, apex upward, while her legs form a cross. Thus the figure suggests the alchemical symbol for Sulphur, a triangle over a cross.

The Woman is the embodiment of the fiery Life-power. Her dance suggests the Law of Rhythm which is everywhere at work. She dances on air, just as the Yods hang in air in Keys 16, 18 and 19. This is a reference to the occult doctrine that the real basis and support of all manifestation is Spirit.

The spirals in her hands turn in opposite directions. They symbolize the dual operation of the One Force. They emit flashes of light. They are symbols of the universal spiral force which enters into all forms of cosmic activity.

The Woman is more than she seems. The traditional interpretation of Tarot says the veil hides the fact that this dancer is male as well as female. THAT WHICH IS, according to the way we think about it, appears now as Father and again as Mother. Yet THAT is limited by neither gender. It includes, and transcends, both male and female.

The veil or scarf is shaped like the Hebrew letter Kaph. This is the letter to which Key 10 is assigned. The meaning here is that the mechanism of the universe, which seems like a system of wheels within wheels, hides the truth that whatever exists is an expression of Love and Life. We are not merely witnesses, observing the operations of a machine. We are living centers through which the ruling and administrative consciousness of an **organism** makes itself known.

He who finds the **Center** finds also the **Temple** or **Palace** of the King. He who finds the **Self** finds the **World-Ruler.** He who knows what is behind the veil of mechanism knows that the **One Power** is not only the **Life-power,** as we have called it so many times. He learns that the **Life-power** is also the **Love-power.**

This is the final revelation, the consciousness reached at the end of the seven stages of unfoldment. This end, moreover, is also the beginning of a new cycle.

Once the **Center** is found, once the personal consciousness is swallowed up in the realization of **Identity** or **Union,** the end, or true purpose, of existence is perceived. He who

enters into the perfect bliss and the **perfect** wisdom of this happy state becomes one of those who know; but cannot tell.

For most persons, this is a brief ecstasy. Yet one never forgets it. By it one's entire outlook is transformed. More than this the experience never comes until one has undergone, through the agency of subconsciousness, many alterations in the personal vehicle. He is a new creature, a member of a different species.

He is unable to transmit his acquired characteristics to posterity by means of the ordinary reproductive process. Yet, by a subtle redirection of the force used in that process, he begets spiritual children.

This is the secret of the leaders who have brought enlightenment to humanity. They waken us from our dream of sense. They stir us deeply. They cannot tell us what they know, but they can give us eyes wherewith to see.

To this end some of their number invented Tarot. As yet, you have only a slight acquaintance with this wonderful device. As you go on with your studies, Tarot will enable you to establish a deep, inner communion with THOSE WHO KNOW.

INTRODUCTION TO TAROT EXAMINATION

1. Have you looked at your Tarot Keys daily as instructed?

2. Are you keeping an Occult Notebook?

3. Has your power of visualization improved?

4. Which Tarot Key appeals the most to you?

5. Why?

6. Which Tarot Key, if any, do you like the least?

7. Why?

8. In what way has Tarot affected your personal life?

9. What did you find of most importance to you in the Course, Introduction to Tarot?

Note: This questionnaire will serve for later comparison in your response to Tarot when, beginning with the next Course, you color your Keys and start the truly intensive transmutational aspects of the ancient Wisdom techniques.

Introduction to Tarot is aimed at familiarizing you with pictorial symbolic **patterns.** The Course of Tarot Fundamentals will start bringing these patterns to life.